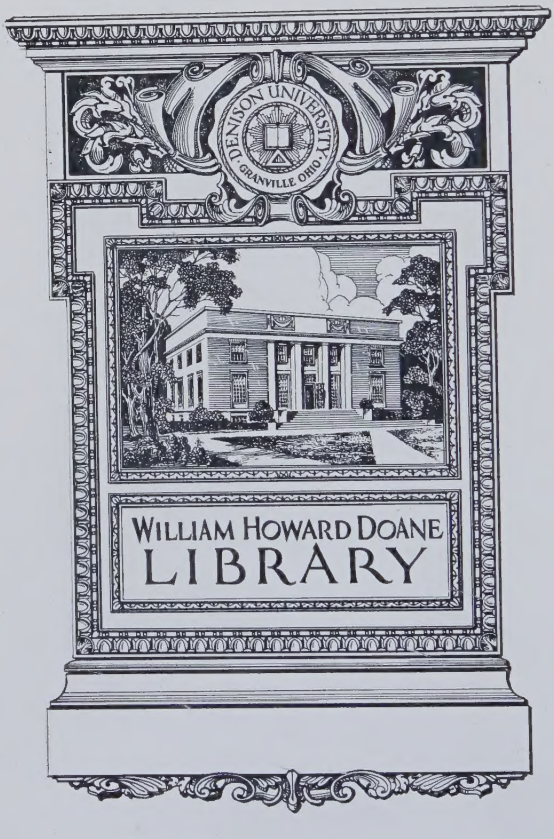
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(PRINCE OF ORANGE)

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WILLIAM III. AND WILLIAM BENTINCK AFTER THEIR RECOVERY FROM SMALLPOX.

From a painting in the possession of Count Godard Bentinck at Amerongen.

WILLIAM BENTINCK

AND

WILLIAM III

(PRINCE OF ORANGE)

THE LIFE OF BENTINCK EARL OF PORTLAND
FROM THE WELBECK CORRESPONDENCE

BY

MARION E. GREW

Ethel (Tuckwell)

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

It was originally intended merely to write a biography of William Bentinck, first Earl of Portland, based on his intimate correspondence with William III. preserved at Welbeck Abbey and placed at the disposal of the writer by the very great generosity of William Bentinck's descendant, the present Duke of Portland. But the diplomatic negotiations, with which the first Earl of Portland was continually occupied, necessitated a sufficient account of the history of his times to make them intelligible to the general reader. This book is still, however, pre-eminently a biography rather than a history, inasmuch as it deals not so much with events, as with the men behind them; their characters, friends and private affairs. It is compiled from contemporary histories, diaries and letters, and from manuscript sources, largely hitherto unpublished. We have to thank Mr. Richard Goulding, Librarian at Welbeck Abbey, for continued and untiring kindness in giving information and help; Dr. P. Geyl, Professor of Dutch Studies in the University of London, for invaluable advice in translation from seventeenth-century Dutch; and Mr. H. K. Hudson for his very great help in reading the proofs. The whole book has been reshaped and corrected by E. S. Grew.

MARION E. GREW.

Chelsea, *September* 1923.

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WILLIAM BENTINCK AND WILLIAM III

(PRINCE OF ORANGE)

CHAPTER I.—1649–1670

INTRODUCTORY

Hans Willem Bentinck was born in 1649, nearly a year after the Peace of Westphalia had concluded the Thirty Years' War, at a period of transition, of reconstruction and regrouping of European Powers. His life has a twofold interest. For the historian the most important aspect of his career is his achievement as a diplomatist. In Holland, in France, in Germany, in England; whenever and wherever important and delicate negotiations were to be carried on, they were entrusted by William III. to William Bentinck as the man of all others on whose fidelity, discretion and reticence he could best rely. But apart from the political value of his life's work, his story has an abiding human interest as that of a great and faithful friendship. Stiff and formal in his manners, guarded and cautious in his speech, all the warmth of his strong nature found expression in zealous devotion for the master whom he served. The relationship of Bentinck and William III. was not merely that of master and servant, it was one of intimate understanding and deep affection. Comrades in boyhood, companions alike on the battleground, in the hunting-field and the Council Chamber, the two friends were separated only when the exigencies of State policy imperatively demanded it, and then only for short intervals. At such times the King fretted with an almost childish impatience for the return of the one man on whom he could depend, in whom he could confide, and, in the words of a contemporary, "with whom he could be easy." If after more than thirty

years of unclouded understanding, jealousy and suspicion on the one side, and pride on the other, dimmed the brightness of that clear and deep affection, the veil lifted at the last when death was already descending on the King. William's last conscious act was to take the hand of his old friend and carry it with the utmost tenderness to his heart.

The record of their friendship, as well as of what William Bentinck did for England, is embalmed in their correspondence, which has been carefully preserved by the Portland family. Nothing could reveal the characters of the two men like these worn and faded letters, hurriedly written in colloquial French, and often signed by each writer only with the initial letter of the Christian name common to both of them, G:[1] After the lapse of more than two hundred years the reader feels a sympathy and understanding that few of their contemporaries can have entertained for either.

William Bentinck was descended from an old Dutch family whose members, if they did not gain European celebrity, were of local importance in their day. He traced his descent from a certain Wicherus Bentinck or Benting, who officiated as a witness to Willibold, Bishop of Utrecht at the foundation of Zwolle, the present capital of the Province of Overyssel, in 1233. Three hundred years later a Hendrik Bentinck, who was directly descended from Wicherus, was sent by the City of Arnhem as their Ambassador to the Emperor Charles V. at Brussels. From this Hendrik, who died in 1548, the Portland branch of the Bentinck family trace their descent. From the earliest times the name of Bentinck appears among the members of the Equestrian Orders of Guelderland and Overyssel in which the nobility of the different States were enrolled. The insignia of these mediæval knightly Orders have been in some cases preserved, as at Utrecht.

The Bentinck family continued to exercise the important local influence of a landed aristocracy of those days. Hans Willem's grandfather, the Freiherr Hendrik Bentinck, who died in 1639, was Lord of Werkeren, Diepenheim and Schoonheten; and Drost or Bailiff at Ysselmüden and Salland. His younger son, Bernhard Bentinck, the father of Hans Willem, and Lord of Diepenheim, was created Bailiff or Drost of Deventer, and was a member of three deputations sent by the States of Overyssel to attend at the Hague in

[1] For Guillaume.

ANCESTRY OF WILLIAM BENTINCK

Wicherus Bentinck, *circa* 1233

Hendrik Bentinck, *d.* 1502, 7th in line of descent

(Four sons from whom all present branches of the Bentinck family descended.)

Hendrik Bentinck, *d.* 1548, 3rd son

Freiherr Heinrich Bentinck, Lord of Diepenheim and Schoonheten, *d.* 1639, 3rd in line of direct descent

Anna van Bloemendael = Freiherr Bernhard Bentinck, Lord of Diepenheim, *d.* 1668 (a younger son)

- Baron Henry Bentinck, Lord of Diepenheim, *b.* 1640, *d.* 1691
- Baron Wolf Willem
- Baron Eusebius, Lord of Schoonheten, 1643
- Eleonora Sophie, 1644–1710
- *Hans Willem*, *b.* 1649
- Isabella, 1651
- Anna Adriane
- Agnes
- Johanna Elizabeth

order to complain of some irregularities in the election of a Stadtholder. Just a year before his father's death, December 21, 1638, Bernhard Bentinck married Anna, daughter of Hans Hendrik van Bloemendael, Drost of Vianen, a little walled town in the neighbourhood of Utrecht, which he would find to-day much as he left it, when his official duties there were concluded.

Bernhard and Anna Bentinck had a family of nine children, and as Hans Willem, born July 20, 1649, was the third son, he must have had opportunities of learning to hold his own among his numerous brothers and sisters before he left Diepenheim for the Hague to become a page in the household of the young Prince William III. of Orange. Of his early boyhood nothing is recorded. Dutch households of that day were ordered on lines of extreme simplicity, and a scrupulous cleanliness and regard for detail that impressed English observers, as much as contemporary English slovenliness astonished Dutch visitors to this country. The affectation of French manners, that Sir William Temple laments, could hardly have begun to infect the wholesome frugality of Dutch country life at this period.

William Bentinck never became a Latin scholar, and never mastered the English language, but he early acquired the use of an incisive and workmanlike French, which he spoke and wrote with fluency and tolerable correctness, if without grace of diction. He must have had a natural bent for arithmetic, for there are still extant pages and pages of intricate accounts in his own handwriting relating to his investments and expenditure in after years, when he had accumulated great wealth.

His second brother, Wolf Willem, appears to have died young, as there is no mention of him in the family archives other than the inscription of his name in the genealogy, and as the two elder sons inherited the Estates of Diepenheim and Schoonheten, the choice of a page to go to Court as the companion of the young Prince William of Orange naturally fell upon his namesake, Hans William Bentinck.

Born into a hostile atmosphere, brought up by a high-principled and conscientious enemy of his House, in the strictest accordance with fixed rules, the young Prince William of Orange had early learnt to conceal the warmth of his eager sensitive nature under a guarded and watchful exterior, and had acquired habits of cautious reticence and

self-control unnatural to a child, though they stood him in good stead in after life. His mental gifts he could not conceal. The Prince was among enemies. William Bentinck was among strangers. There were many suspicious eyes to watch the growing intimacy of the two boys. The young page, if the inferior in mental endowments, had kindred tastes, and a strength of affection almost equal to the Prince's own. A close friendship sprang up between them that manhood only deepened and cemented. Caution and reticence were as necessary for the Prince's friend as for the Prince himself, and in these early years the future diplomatist learnt the art of concealing what he knew, what he thought and what he felt.

The life of William Bentinck coincides with the rise of a new era in European politics. The Peace of Westphalia, which brought to an end the Thirty Years' War in 1648, inaugurated the rise of Modern Europe, and may be taken roughly as the line of demarcation between the Middle Ages and modern times. The Empire and the Papacy, theoretical representatives of temporal and spiritual power, had been the two great centralising forces in Europe. The rise of independent nationalities and the growth of Free Thought had loosened these unifying bonds. The Papacy gradually ceased to be a dominating factor in European politics. The Peace of Westphalia marked the full recognition of the sovereignty of all the Princes of the Empire, Roman Catholic and Protestant alike, in their respective territories. It was an abrogation of the Sovereignty of Rome.[1] It marked also the decline of the power of the Holy Roman Empire. From this date the Imperial House of Hapsburg devoted increasing attention to the consolidation of their hereditary dominions; while among German States, Brandenburg, later on to be known as the House of Hohenzollern, began slowly to assume the position that the Hapsburgs were losing, and eventually succeeded to the headship of the German people. But in the middle of the seventeenth century Germany was as yet inchoate, exhausted and devastated by the Thirty Years' War; little more than an agglomeration of petty states ruled over by virtually independent princes, most of whom were to be bribed or bought, all of

[1] See Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*. "In this light it was regarded by Innocent X. who commanded his legate to protest against it and subsequently declared it void."

whom were nominally under the headship of the Imperial House of Hapsburg. Spain, ruled over by another branch of the House of Hapsburg and including the Spanish Netherlands, the Milanese and the two Sicilies, was decadent.

England in the Cromwellian grip was for a brief period a factor to be considered and respected in European politics, while the Stuarts were refugees on the Continent. France under Louis XIV., compact and alert, was stealthily on the watch for fresh aggressions in pursuance of the policy of making the Rhine the eastern frontier of France, and of destroying the power of the Austro-Spanish dynasty by uniting France and Spain under one crown.[1] The road was already paved for France, but as in the sixteenth century Holland had withstood and defied Imperial Spain, so now she was destined in the seventeenth to restore the equilibrium of Europe, and to defend it against the crafty aggressions of France. But whereas in the sixteenth century a desperate people turned at bay, in the seventeenth, the unequal contest was waged by the genius, courage and unflinching determination of one man, William III. of Orange.

Between Spain and Holland lay Flanders, the Spanish Netherlands that had remained under Spanish rule when Holland became independent.[2] This territory offered no serious obstacle to France; but it was important that Holland should either be allied with her, or incapable of interfering with her designs.

In 1650 the internal affairs of Holland were in an unsettled and troubled state. The Stadtholder William II. by his tactless and arbitrary government exacerbated public feeling and provoked determined opposition. His brief career was brought to a close prematurely by an attack of smallpox. He died at 24, leaving, after his short and stormy period of government, a heritage of resentment, mistrust and civil dissension, which long survived him. William III. was born

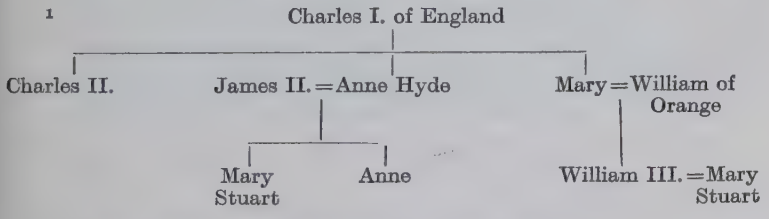
[1] The Peace of Westphalia had already given France a hold on the middle Rhine. She obtained by this Treaty the three Bishoprics of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, Breisach and Austrian Alsace, with the exception of the free Imperial City of Strasburg, which Louis XIV. subsequently occupied. France was to garrison Philippsburg and no fortifications were to be erected on the right bank of the Rhine between Bâle and Philippsburg.

[2] By the Peace of Westphalia Spain acknowledged the complete independence of Holland.

a week after his father died. His mother, Mary Stuart,[1] was not a woman capable of steering her course discreetly among hostile and adverse influences; nor was she any match for her mother-in-law, the "Dowager Princess," Amélie de Solmes,[2] who desired by means of the guardianship of the young Prince to keep in her own hands the strings of intrigue, in which she had both practice and ability. The hostility between these two natural guardians of the young Prince, his mother and grandmother, was deep-seated and persistent. No motives of policy could induce them to make common cause against the public animosity to their house. Thus the way was left clear for the Republican Party, for whom William II.'s premature death was providential. So strongly was this felt to be the case that John Milton wrote to the States-General congratulating them on the death of the Stadtholder which opportunely freed them from bondage.

Among the United Provinces the State of Holland was the most important. She lost no time in dealing with the opportunity. The Netherlands Republic was principally maintained by her resources, and she bore the larger proportion of the expenses of the federation. A meeting of all the States was summoned at the Hague. Holland declared her intention of declining to recognise an infant as Stadtholder, and persuaded the other Provinces to agree to dispense with a Commander-in-Chief, and divide the Command of the Army among the States. Her representative assembly became the chief factor in the government and supplied the vacant place of Stadtholder. The autocratic pretensions of William II. had vanished. His infant son had inherited only family quarrels and political dissension; he had not even a nominal authority. The central authority had only been transferred, not destroyed, and the

[1]



[2] For an account of this remarkable woman see Temple's Works and Groen van Prinsterer.

expectations that his House would derive any advantage from a time of general confusion were disappointed.

The stability of the new order was soon to be tested by a prolonged and disastrous war with England. In March 1651 Cromwell sought to open negotiations with the Dutch on terms which included the expulsion by them of all English refugees who were supported by the Orange Party. But that House still had a strong following among the people, and Cromwell's ambassadors were insulted in the streets of the Hague with shouts of "regicides" and "executioners." Their return to England was shortly followed by the Navigation Act,[1] which amounted to a declaration of war on Holland. The naval war which followed pressed heavily upon the Dutch people in decay of commerce and increased taxation. In 1654 John de Witt, now Grand Pensionary or Chief Minister of Holland and head of the Anti-Orange or Peace Party, made terms with Cromwell. Cromwell would treat only on the basis of the exclusion of the Prince of Orange from the offices of Stadtholder and Commander-in-Chief. This condition was incorporated in the Treaty in a secret article (known only to the States of Holland). For the rest the terms of peace obliged the Dutch to recognise the supremacy of the English flag in the narrow seas.

When the secret of the Act of Exclusion, as it was called, became known,[2] it created a fervour of indignation that was to react on de Witt long afterwards. The peace negotiations were very protracted, and the exhaustion caused by the war was in itself sufficient to account for a general discontent and widespread dissatisfaction which began to find expression in demonstrations in favour of the Prince of Orange by the populace. From north and south, even in Holland itself, the stronghold of de Witt's influence, came reports of Orange disturbances, of which the Prince's partisans were quick to make the most. The very children hardily espoused the cause of the boy Prince, and a band of these truculent small loyalists gave considerable trouble to the authorities at the Hague. De Witt, self-constituted guardian of his country's

[1] An attack on the Dutch carrying trade. It forbad the importation of goods in any but English vessels or those of the country in which the goods were made.

[2] See Thurlow's State Papers. The Deputies were absolved from the oath of secrecy after the Treaty was signed, but it became known before that.

WILLIAM III., PRINCE OF ORANGE, AS A CHILD.
From a painting at Haarlem.

liberties, had need of all his firmness, self-control and adroitness in order to steer a straight course. Pre-eminent alike in ability and integrity, he had combined all the forces of Dutch oligarchy, and made the State of Holland mistress of the Confederation of which he was himself virtually the head.

The question of the guardianship of the young Prince, over which his mother and grandmother had quarrelled in his cradle, had been officially settled by dividing the responsibility for his upbringing between his mother, his uncle the Elector of Brandenburg,[1] and his grandmother —an arrangement in which the Dowager Princess was too astute not to conciliate the dominant party by acquiescing.

The year 1660, which saw the Restoration of Charles Stuart to the throne of England, modified for the better the position of his nephew in Holland. The States of Holland had hitherto shown so much personal consideration for the Prince of Orange as to permit his occupying a wing of the Old Palace of the Counts of Holland, in a part of which the States-General held their sittings, but he was officially unrecognised, and they refused to undertake any responsibility for his education. The year before, by agreement between the two Princesses, Frederick of Nassau, Lord of Zuylestein,[2] a natural son of Prince Frederick Henry of Orange, had been appointed Governor of the Prince. William was now removed to the University of Leyden, where his education was carried on by various tutors, and a household was appointed for him on a scale that befitted his birth, and the assumption that he would succeed to the powers exercised by his father. The sons of noble Dutch families filled the positions of first gentleman-in-waiting, first equerry, and first steward.

[1]

Frederick Henry = Amélie de Solmes
Prince of Orange

Mary Stuart = William II. — Louise of Nassau = Frederick William Elector of Brandenburg
daughter of Charles I.

William III. = Mary Stuart
Prince of Orange — daughter of James II.

[2] See *Mémoire de Huygens*, 1659, for instructions to Zuylestein for the Prince's education, and for de Witt's views on the same subject, the reports of d'Estrades and Wicquefort, published by Groen van Prinsterer.

So far all these arrangements were not officially recognised by the States-General, but the Restoration of 1660 altered the Prince's prospects. It was a moment that needed all de Witt's diplomacy. He had bought the friendship of Cromwell at the price of enmity to Charles II.'s nephew,[1] yet for Holland friendship with England was essential. Charles Stuart was now invited to the Hague and received there with Royal honours. On his visit to the States of Holland he presented to de Witt a document commending to their care the Prince and Princess of Orange.

Though the Stuart Restoration was an event that portended well for the House of Orange, to Prince William himself it must have appeared a doubtful blessing in its immediate results. His ultimate reinstatement in the hereditary offices of his father already appeared more than probable in view of the strong feeling in the ranks of the people, his own remarkable promise,[2] and the Stuart connection. But de Witt's distrust of the Orange Party was too deeply rooted for him to do the obvious thing and recognise the ultimate succession of William to the Stadtholdership. Therefore the measures taken by him in compliance with the insistence of Charles II. were of the nature of a compromise. By a cumbersome expedient the young Prince was made " a child of State," as it was called, and the States of Holland made themselves responsible for his education, resolving that they should " bring him up in the practice of all the virtues which might render him fit for the functions dignities and offices which had belonged to his predecessors." It was about this time that the Princess Royal, while visiting her brother in England, died of smallpox. She died imploring Charles to be a father to her son.

It was in this atmosphere of contending factions, domestic and political, that William Bentinck found himself on joining the household of the Prince of Orange as a page. In the next few years were laid the foundations of their friendship. Henceforth for more than thirty years William Bentinck was hardly ever separated from the Prince, except when engaged upon one of those diplomatic missions, in which his

[1] " I am not surprised," wrote de Witt to Beverwaert, Ambassador in England, " that I have the reputation over there of being opposed to the interests of the Prince of Orange, for I have at all times placed them after those of the State."

[2] " Ce petit prince promet beaucoup de Luy," d'Estrades to Louis XIV., 1663.

fidelity, reticence and strong sense made him invaluable, and in which his abilities found their greatest scope.

A glimpse of the young Prince, and the household to which William Bentinck was attached, is afforded by the diarist Gourville in 1664, when the two boys were respectively fourteen and fifteen years old. Neither William nor Bentinck ever forgot the friendship conceived for Gourville at this time, and years afterwards, when he was a very old man, failing physically and mentally, Bentinck visited him in Paris at William's request.[1]

"Towards the beginning of the year 1665," says Gourville,[2] "I went to the Hague, where I made some stay. M. de Montbas, who was well enough disposed towards the Court of M. le Prince d'Orange, presented me to him, and for the first time I had the honour of making my bow."

After this presentation Gourville continues—

"I was often at play with him and the ladies of the Hague; but as it was the custom in that country that the women retired at eight o'clock, M. le Prince d'Orange adopted the expedient of going in the evenings to the houses of M. de Montbas, M. d'Odijck, and others again to play till half-past nine. He always did me the honour of including me in these parties."

Meagre as the details are, they are valuable as throwing at least some light on the Court life of Holland of the day, its social customs, the early retreat of the ladies, and the extra hour and a half that the young Prince and such friends of his as Bentinck were allowed to spend at the houses of a few selected neighbours. The "M. de Montbas" whom Gourville mentions as having presented him at Court was Jean Barton, Comte de Montbas, at that time engaged in the service of Holland, and married to a sister of Pieter de Groot. M. d'Odijck is often mentioned.[3] He was William Adrien, Seigneur d'Odijck, and belonged to an illegitimate branch of the House of Nassau. As "premier noble" of

[1] Charles II. shared his nephew's regard for Gourville, and said of him that he had "the soundest head of any Frenchman I know."

[2] *Mémoires de Gourville.*

[3] See "M. de B——'s" *Memoirs.*

Zealand, he exercised great influence in that province and derived considerable wealth from it. He was a member of the States-General, and was frequently employed as a diplomatist. He was a very correct man of distinguished manners and magnificent surroundings. He spoke well and to the point. He was always occupied with his business or his pleasures. It was said that there was something mysterious about all his dissipations, that they were designed to serve his own ends, and to interest persons with whom he had to deal, and to gain their confidence. When engaged on business he was fertile in expedients, clear-sighted, not to be taken unawares. He lived at the Hague with great splendour.

Later on Gourville was again at the Hague, "where," he says, "I paid my court to M. le Prince d'Orange very regularly, much encouraged thereto by the kindness he always showed me." Gourville on his side was able to show some small attention to the Prince.

"I had a cook, who had a great reputation, and M. le Prince d'Orange, as well as the Ambassadors, having told me that they would much like to put him to the proof, we agreed that I should give them a dinner at the country house of one of my friends, and that on arrival there each guest should relinquish his official character and his rank, an arrangement which was faithfully carried out."

Another contemporary mentions William Bentinck's attendance with the Prince at an entertainment at which a minute description is given of the dishes. The contemporary poet Droste,[1] who wrote down his recollections in doggerel verse, describes a sort of wedding breakfast given to celebrate the betrothal of his cousin, Elizabeth Ruysch, daughter of the Registrar of the States-General. It took place about this time (1665). "The Prince himself came to wish them luck," says Droste, "and had Benting with him, at that time promoted to be Cornet. As Stadtholder, he (William) has given him many offices, so that he has made him so rich in treasure that a page has never thereto attained through his services." There follows a curious account of seventeenth-century profiteering on the part of an unscrupulous tradesman.

[1] Droste Coenraet, "Overblijfsels van Geheugchenis," der.

"As to what concerns the Bridal party, my uncle was greatly cheated. The food was not at all that which it appeared to be. Pies which were supposed to be peacock or game contained nothing but minced liver, and more of the same kind not worth mentioning. My uncle was obliged to pay an incredible sum for them. Many friends were there both on the Bride and bridegroom's side, who one found at table splendidly attired."

The glimpses thus afforded of the household and companions of the Prince of Orange during these years of his minority are in ironic contrast with the gravity of the affairs of Holland from which de Witt was seeking to exclude him. War, for which the country was ill prepared, had broken out with England in 1665 owing to the unsleeping commercial and colonial rivalry between the countries. The Northern and Eastern Provinces were easily overrun by the troops of the Bishop of Münster who had concluded a treaty with Charles II. and was subsidised by England. The embarrassment of the Government was the signal for a flood of Orange enthusiasm which voiced the discontent of the common people, on whom the distress caused by the war fell most heavily. De Witt could not disregard it with impunity.

Louis XIV. was kept informed of the rising tide of Orange sentiment in the Provinces, but it was not to his interest to see the House of Orange restored at the bidding of Charles II., and the extinction of the Republican and Peace Party led by de Witt. Largely owing to his mediation the Bishop of Münster evacuated his conquests, and in January 1666 Louis XIV. declared war against England and made an alliance with Holland. From this improved platform de Witt, with consummate skill, deprived the Orange Party of the initiative by himself taking steps to concede a measure of official recognition to the Prince, who was now sixteen years old. At the moment when his enemies were publicly venturing to proclaim him traitor, de Witt won over the Dowager Princess, and persuaded her to propose to the States of Holland that they should undertake her grandson's education, in order to ensure his being prepared for the responsibilities that awaited him. The States accepted the charge, nominating de Witt and some of his adherents as the Prince's guardians. The position of de Witt and his party was thus stabilised, while the adherents

of the Prince and the Orange malcontents found the ground cut away from beneath their feet.

The only person thoroughly displeased at this new aspect of affairs was the Prince himself. He had been holding a sort of Court at the Hague, which was largely attended, especially by officers from the garrison who escorted him when he went out driving. Now he was to be relegated to the position of schoolboy, and the scheme which his mother's death and the hostile attitude of England had averted six years before was actually to be carried out.

William declined to have anything to do with his grandmother's proposal. He had been brought up to regard those by whom the State was governed as his enemies. Those by whom he was surrounded were largely Englishmen who sought to identify the Prince's interests with those of Charles II. His uncle and governor, Frederick of Nassau Zuylestein, to whom the Prince was much attached, was married to an Englishwoman, and was in intimate correspondence with the Duke of York. De Witt determined that Zuylestein must go, and in this he was supported by the Princess Dowager. William made every effort to retain his governor, and when he was unsuccessful became ill with anger and disappointment. De Witt was obdurate, Zuylestein went, and with him those of the Prince's household who were either English, or regarded as promoting English interests. His grandmother the Prince never forgave. But with the power of deception in which he was already practised, he appeared entirely reconciled to the new régime. "This prince," wrote the French Ambassador d'Estrades, "is very dissembling and will neglect nothing to gain his ends." William Bentinck, a Dutchman and the son of a Dutchman, was unaffected by these household revolutions of the Prince, as appears from his presence with William at the wedding party of Droste's cousin which has been already mentioned.

The naval war with England had continued with varying success. Peace negotiations were opened at Breda early in 1667, but were not concluded till July, after de Ruyter's expedition to Chatham, when he burnt the shipping in the Medway. De Witt was overwhelmed with congratulations at its successful conclusion; the popular satisfaction found expression in public rejoicings. At Breda the Ambassadors of France and England caused conduits of wine to flow in

the public squares, and a bonfire was lighted in front of the Town Hall, at which the Deputies of the States were holding a banquet.

William himself, not to be outdone by these official rejoicings, gave a "dans feest" or Fancy Dress Ball on his own account to celebrate the general relief and thankfulness of the country, and paid the expenses out of his own privy purse. This "ballet de la Paix," which was held at the Hague on February 7, 1668, was specially magnificent, and was modelled on a French Court Ballet. All the nobility "of both sexes" accompanied the Prince, says Droste, who describes it.

"To begin with, the Goddess of War was represented there, who had divided Great Britain and Ourselves by discord, and after the Peace being again bound to one another, Prosperity and Peace were found among the people. The Prince of Orange himself represented Mercury and imparted the tidings to the spectators." [1]

Such were the amusements of the Court, in which William Bentinck shared. This year took place the first break-up of his childish home, on the death of his father. His two elder brothers succeeded to the Estates of Diepenheim and Schoonheten. The eldest son, Baron Henry Bentinck, was now twenty-eight, Drost of Twenthe and a Colonel of Cavalry, and had been a member of the Knightly Order of Overyssel since 1663, so that he was already a man of influence in the Province. The second surviving son, Baron Eusebius Bentinck, became Lord of Schoonheten. He was six years senior to William and was a Burgomaster of Maestricht. He also became a member of the Ridderschaft. Neither of these two elder brothers was as yet married. William seems to have been summoned home during his father's last illness, and wrote to tell the Prince of his death. The Prince's reply, characteristic of all that follows in its tenderness and sympathy, is the first extant letter of the correspondence between the two friends. It is dated from the Hague, August 13, 1665 :

[1] Droste, L. 1130.

"It is with much distress that I have learned from the letter you have written me the unhappy death of your father. I can assure you with truth that there is no one who shares more nearly in the sorrow that has fallen upon your House than myself, and upon you especially, for I am so much your friend that I feel all that happens to you, as if it had happened to myself. I will seek any place and occasion to show you effectively how much I can be your very affectionate friend.

"G. Prince d'Orange."

It looked as if the Peace Rejoicings were after all to be illusory. A sudden attack by Louis XIV. on the Spanish Netherlands [1] filled the triumphant de Witt with surprise and dismay, though d'Estrades was commissioned to reassure him. He entered into negotiations with Sweden, and proceeded to collect fresh levies. This at once raised the vexed question of a Commander-in-Chief. Except in Holland and Utrecht, feeling was general that William should be appointed to the office, and that it should be held by John Maurice of Nassau till he came of age. In the face of this strong feeling de Witt injudiciously but successfully carried in the State of Holland the "Perpetual Edict," "an eternal and immutable" law to provide against the offices of Captain, or Admiral-General and Stadtholder being held at the same time by any one person. Prince John Maurice was appointed to the command of the troops. The danger of a European war was, however, averted by the conclusion of the Triple Alliance (January 1668) between England, Holland and Sweden, a step which Charles II. was reluctantly forced to take by his Parliament. It was negotiated by Sir William Temple, a man of wisdom and integrity rarely to be met with in English statesmen of that unstable age. He conceived a warm admiration and friendship for de Witt as well as for the Prince and William Bentinck,[2] who more than thirty years later became related to him by marriage. In consequence of the Triple Alliance,

[1] This was the beginning of the "War of Devolution," by which Louis XIV. claimed the Spanish Netherlands by the right of his wife, Maria Teresa. In the course of three months he had taken possession of the frontier fortresses.

[2] See Temple's Works.

Louis XIV. made peace with Spain at Aix-la-Chapelle (May 1668).[1]

In appearance the policy of de Witt had succeeded. Louis XIV. was foiled, the Peace Party had triumphed, but at home the Orange Party, exacerbated by the "Perpetual Edict" and encouraged by the English Alliance, were more than usually active.

[1] Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. Louis XIV. retained many of the towns he had occupied in the Spanish Netherlands.

CHAPTER II.—1670–1678

WILLIAM BENTINCK'S FIRST VISITS TO ENGLAND

In the late autumn of 1670 William Bentinck in company with Prince William paid his first visit to England. The ostensible reason for the journey was that the Prince sought to recover a sum of money due for his mother's dowry which had never been paid. Now that friendly relations had been re-established between England and Holland by the Triple Alliance a favourable occasion presented itself for the recovery of this debt. It seems, besides, not unlikely that de Witt may have welcomed the opportunity of securing the absence of the Prince for a time, and so allaying the continual activities of Orange malcontents. Before he left for England the wedding of William Bentinck's elder brother Eusebius Burchard, Lord of Schoonheten, was celebrated in October. Eusebius married Elizabeth, daughter of Baron Dietrich van Brakel. From Eusebius the surviving elder branch of the Bentinck family is descended.

There is no reason to suppose that his nephew's visit was particularly welcome to Charles, who had not been anxious for the Triple Alliance, and was still less inclined to pay remote debts to his sister. It may have been at the instigation of de Witt that the Prince and his suite visited the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. At any rate they saw Newmarket on the way, as appears from the following letter from the King to the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University.[1]

"Trusty and well beloved we greet you well. Our Dear Nephew the Prince of Orange intending in his return from Newmarket to pass by that our Town of Cambridge to see the University, and we desiring that in all places where

[1] From the Baker MSS. in the Cambridge University Library, xxv. 302. Vols. 1–23 are to be found in the British Museum.

he shall pass within this our Kingdom to be received with those respects that are due to his birth and quality, and to the near relation that he hath to our person, and that may express the particular affection and kindness we have for him : we have thought good hereby to signify our pleasure to you ; and accordingly our will and pleasure is that among the divers compliments you shall find fit to be made to him, you cause a public creation to be made of conferring degrees in the several faculties upon such gentlemen of our dear Nephew's traine and attendance, as shall desire the same, as also upon such and so many other persons as you our Vice-Chancellor and Heads of Houses shall think fit.

" And so we bid you farewell.

" Given at our Court of Whitehall
" 27 Dy of November 1670
" ARLINGTON."

A resident of Cambridge at the time, Alderman Newton, who kept a diary, left an account of the Prince's reception :[1]

" Saturday morning about 10 of the Clock came in to Cambridge, His Highnesse the Prince of Orange being then between 19 and 20 years of age a well countenanced man a smooth and smeeger face, and a handsome head of hayre of his owne, there were in all 3 coaches 6 horses a peece, the Prince was in the middlemost, and sat at the head end thereof on the right hand, the Lord Ossery sat in the same end with him. Mr. Law then Mayor being still at London Mr. Herring was his deputy who with the Aldermen in scarlet, and the Common Counsell and other Gownemen in their habits being ready at the Dolphin Inne, mett and saluted the Prince at the hither end of Jesus Lane against the Dolphin just upon the turne of his coach, and Mr. Herring did present himself to him, who in a courteous manner leaned over my Lord Ossery and gave audience to the Deputy Mayor who made then a short speech the substance whereof was, that he was there to wait upon his Highnesse and to assure him of his hearty wellcome to the Towne, and should be most ready to

[1] P. 58, 1670, Nov. 26. " The Prince of Orange his reception."

do him all becoming service that was in our power . . . and wished that his stay might have bin longer amongst us . . . we did assure him that we were and would remaine his most obedient servants and therewith made a low obedience to the Prince. The Prince returned him thanks for the respects, and said he had a minde to see this towne, but his business was such as would permit but a short stay, otherwise he would have gratified our desires with his company longer, and then after due respects on each side the coaches passed down by St. Johns to the Schooles where there was a Commencement for several degrees." The Prince was unable to stay for the completion of the ceremony. . . . "The Prince and his retinue dyned at the Provost's of King's College and after dinner went to Trinity Colledge and so went the same night."

Newton only notes that a "Commencement for several degrees" was made at the Schools, but the Annals of the University show that on November 26, 1670, Graces were passed for conferring the honorary degree of M.A. upon the Prince of Orange, and that of LL.B. upon Gulielmus Bentecc (among others).

The Prince and his retinue left Cambridge the same day and passed the night of November 26 at Audley End.[1] It was on the direct road to London, to which they returned next day. Their visit to Oxford, which took place the third week in December, was longer and more ceremonious as befitted that ancient Royalist stronghold. One Peter Mears, President of St. John's College, was Vice-Chancellor for the year, and to him news was brought on December 6 that "William Henry Prince of Aurange" and his retinue would arrive two days later. Convocation was summoned in all haste to assemble at 8 a.m. in the gloom of the winter morning to

[1] *Audley End*—"that goodly Palace built by Howard Earl of Suffolk once Lord Treasurer. It is a mixt fabric 'twixt antiq and modern, but observable for its being compleately finish'd, and without comparison is one of the stateliest palaces in the Kingdom. . . . The gallery is the most cheerfull and I think one of the best in England, a faire dining-roome and the rest of the lodgings answerable, with a pretty Chapell. It has also a bowling-ally, a noble well-walled, wooded and watered park, full of fine collines and ponds, the river glides before the Palace to which is an avenue of lime trees, but all this is much diminished by its being placed in an obscure bottome."—*Evelyn's Diary*.

appoint delegates, who should order all things appropriately for the Prince's reception. William, however, postponed his arrival till December 19, so that the university authorities had plenty of time after all to rehearse their proceedings. "Between three and four of the clock St. Marie's great bell rang out" to give notice of the Prince's approach, and as the clear tones floated from the High Street over the ancient university its members hastened to obey the summons. "All the degrees of the Universitie met there in their formalities." The Vice-Chancellor and twenty-seven M.A.'s appointed as special pro-proctors marshalled them up the street to Carfax (whose square tower alone is still standing), and thence to Christ Church Great Gate, "placing them one by one on each side of the way." It was now nearly dark, and every sixth or eighth scholar was given a lighted torch. Now all being ready the Vice-Chancellor with the doctors "came out of St. Marie's in their scarlet, and stood at the dore to expect the Prince's cumming."

One can imagine the picturesque scene in the mild misty dusk of a December afternoon; the flickering torches along the gracious curve of the most beautiful street in the world, and the red gowns of the doctors glowing in the fading light beneath the grey walls of St. Mary's.

At the East Gate were assembled the municipal worthies —for the town was not to be outshone by the university— and the Mayor, and his brethren in their scarlet gowns, lined the way, "together with the present bailives in their scarlet, and those that had borne that office in their black furred gowns."

Soon after four the heavy coaches of the Prince and his retinue rumbled in over the cobbled streets, horses and carriages deeply coated with mud. Immediately on his arrival the unfortunate Prince was subject to a perfect orgy of orations. The Recorder of the City, the Mayor on his right hand, led off with a short speech in English followed by a more practical mark of the city's regard in the presentation of "a rich pair of fring gloves, and a dozen of white kid." "From thence cumming up the street not without applause or hummings after him by the vulgar of the town," to St. Mary's, where the Vice-Chancellor delivered an oration —in Latin no doubt—"passed thence with divers hums after him through the Scholars to Carfax." Royalist Oxford could not forget that the young Dutch Prince was Mary

Stuart's son. "On his alighting at Christ Church the Dean, Dr. John Fell, received him with another speech," which we trust was the last, for "that being done, he was conducted into the Deane's Lodgings, where he and his retinue lodged that night." William's host is the original of the rhyme, "I do not like you, Dr. Fell," parodied by an undergraduate from a Satire of Martial. He had borne arms for the King in the Civil Wars, and received promotion at the Restoration. He was made Bishop of Oxford in 1675, and was a busy, active man, violently anti-papist, though too good a Royalist to vote for the Exclusion Bill.

The day after their arrival the Prince and his retinue "in several coaches borrowed from the Heads of Houses" were conducted over the university by the Vice-Chancellor. They were entertained with speeches at each of the Colleges, with the exception of Corpus, where by some unexplained omission, there was no one to receive them. More to the Prince's taste must have been "the Dutch compliment," with which Jacob Bobart received him at the "Physic Garden." This famous Curator of the Oxford Botanic Gardens, known as "the Physic Garden" within living memory, survives in a rare and curious print. Standing outside Inigo Jones's fine gateway he wears a long, full-skirted habit, and is accompanied by his favourite goat. Tradition says that upon "rejoicing days" he used to have his beard tagged with silver. When the Court took refuge from the plague in Oxford, Charles II. was fond of walking in the Physic Gardens, so that their Curator was well accustomed to Royal visitors.

The party returned to Christ Church for morning prayer in the Cathedral, at which the Prince was seated in the Bishop's chair "with Dr. Henry Compton by him, in his scarlet, to direct him in the service," the Prince being naturally unacquainted with the ritual of the Church of England. Henry Compton was the youngest son of the 2nd Earl of Northampton. He had received a commission in the Royal Horse Guards after the Restoration, but relinquished the army as a career for the Church. Here promotion was rapid, though he owed it more to family and Royal favour than to any inherent gifts of eloquence. He was made a Canon of Christ Church in 1669, and a year or two afterwards Evelyn, hearing him preach before the Court, observes with indulgent candour, "This worthy person's talent is not preaching, but he is like to make a grave and serious good man." Seven

years after this morning service in Christ Church he officiated as Bishop of London at William's marriage. The religious education of the two young Princesses, Mary and Anne, was entrusted to him, so that the strong and deeply religious character of William's future wife was to some extent moulded by his early influence.

After Morning Service followed the great business of the day, the conferring of Doctors' degrees on the Prince and his retinue, which took place in the Theatre. The Prince, having put on his doctor's scarlet, was ushered in at the Great Door, while "the musicians standing at one end of the Musick Gallery plaid on the wind musick till he came to the bottome of the ascent going up to his chaire."

Then came more orations, and afterwards the conferring of the degree of D.C.L. upon the Prince and his suite. Anthony à Wood says [1] that "This creation was called by some the Orangean Creation, tho' not so pleasing to the generalty as might be wished for." After the Prince was seated, these persons followed created D.C.L.:

William Albert Count Dona
Henry de Nassau Lord in Ouwerkerk
William de Nassau. Lord in Leersum
William Benting or Bentinck.

This ceremony over, the Vice-Chancellor presented to the Prince in the name of the University, "King Charles I. his Works," in two volumes richly bound and gilt. William characteristically evading more orations in the Musick Schoole, where he was expected, "went forthwith to St. John's," where the Vice-Chancellor "at his owne charges gave him and his retinew a noble dinner." He afterwards heard Evening Service in the stately Chapel of New College, and returning to his lodging at Christ Church left next morning "at seven of the clock" for London.

As for the main purpose of the Prince's visit, no attempt was made by the King at that time to discharge his debt. In London some surprise was felt in Court circles at Charles's neglect of his nephew and his nephew's interests. It was generally attributed to his friendship for France. "Our Court," says Burnet, commenting on the Prince's visit, "had still so much occasion for all the money that could be raised from a House of Commons that they were never

[1] *Fasti Oxonienses*, 1670.

in a condition to do justice to anyone, or to pay their debt." [1]

William, however, was not a man to forgo his rights, and Sir William Temple observes, commenting on the peace between England and Holland concluded February 1674:

"The sum of money given to his Majesty by the States, though it was not considerable in itself and less to the King; by the greatest part of it being applied to the Prince of Orange's satisfaction for his mother's portion, that had never been paid; yet it gave the King the whole honour of the peace."

The methods and manners of Whitehall cannot have been greatly to the taste of a Dutchman accustomed to the scrupulous cleanliness and ordered simplicity of life in Holland. One recalls Droste's comment on Whitehall, that all the carpets were faded and stained, but would be valuable if they were clean. Their condition was more than accounted for by the same writer's description of Charles II. at table:

"Another time I saw the King eat in the evening.
After he was seated with his brother at table
And the dishes were brought up by his people
He was by his darlings first waited upon.
I mean a great number of hungry dogs,
Who round about the table stood on their hind legs
Ready to spring at the meat,
If Charles had not immediately satisfied the curs.
Thus he broke the heads from hares and partridges
Or cut legs off fowls for them as the readiest food,
And stuck a morsel in the open jaws of every beast
Who then took it with him up on to a chair to gnaw.
However high Princes are raised above their people
They are men, who live at home like others." [2]

The friendly relations with England, which had rendered possible the visit of Bentinck and the Prince, were short-lived and illusory. Even before his nephew's visit Charles II. had concluded with Louis XIV. the Secret Treaty of

[1] Burnet, see Harl. MSS. 6584.
[2] A literal translation of Droste's doggerel lines.

Dover,[1] by which he promised to unite his arms with those of France for the destruction of the United Provinces; to support the claims of Louis on the Spanish Succession, and to declare himself a Roman Catholic. In return he was to receive a subsidy, which should make him independent of Parliament. With the English King a Pensioner, and the English fleet at his disposal, Louis XIV. now prepared to carry out his designs. The reduction of the United Provinces was to precede that of the Spanish Netherlands.[2] During the next year, 1671, he made active preparations for war, while de Witt, lulled to a false security, could not believe in the imminence of the danger with which his country was threatened, and with a blind obstinacy for which he subsequently paid with his life, persisted in postponing the appointment of the Prince to the office of Captain-General. His ambassador, Pieter de Groot, wrote from Paris urging him to prepare for war. In this supreme crisis de Witt seems to have been deserted by his characteristic foresight, and that adroitness which in a lesser man would have been called cunning. He failed to take prompt and energetic measures for defence, and still fearful of delivering his country into the hands of the Orange Party, hesitated to raise an army. But at last it was plain even to him that war was inevitable. In February 1672 William was appointed Captain-General of the Union; in March England declared war against Holland, and in April France followed suit. William was now twenty-one. He had succeeded to the office of Captain-General in response to an irresistible mandate from his countrymen. Young and inexperienced, he found a condition of things that would have taxed the abilities of the most skilled and practised soldier. Not only was there an overwhelming coalition against him, but many of the Dutch officers were unfit to command, and had been appointed through family interest, the men were undisciplined and the batteries deficient in all munitions of war.

Meanwhile well-equipped French armies under the first commanders of the age attacked the Dutch on the south and east simultaneously. Louis XIV found the Rhine easily fordable after a long summer's drought, the Prince stationed near Arnhem was powerless to oppose him, and fell back on

[1] May 1670.

[2] The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle with Spain had left some of the border fortresses already in his hands.

Holland. Arnhem, Nimeguen, and the whole of Guelderland submitted to the French, and Louis made a triumphal entry into Utrecht.

During these difficult days William Bentinck shared in all the Prince's councils, labours and anxieties, only leaving him to carry out some order, or perform some duty in which courage and fidelity could compensate as far as might be for inexperience. His history at this moment is merged in the history of his country and its young commander. How desperate was the plight of that country appears from the letters to the Prince of his kinsman John Maurice of Nassau. The important town of Muiden on the Zuyder Zee was now within reach of the French armies, ships going to Amsterdam were within the range of French guns. A few days' delay at Naarden by the French Commander enabled John Maurice to forestall him by entering the town with a few hundred men.[1] The letters that followed, from a brave and competent general, paint in graphic detail, and not without a certain grim humour, the conditions into which affairs had drifted [2]—armies unprovided with every essential munition of war, a bourgeoisie jealous and suspicious, a peasantry hostile and fearful. "There is nothing left for us in case of attack but to make use of our swords." This was on June 22. A little later his soldiers had succeeded, in spite of active opposition on the part of bands of peasants, in breaking some sluices. Already the rising waters prevented the further advance of the French Cavalry. To all his letters William replied calmly and without comment, telling John Maurice to act on his own judgment and assuring him of his unalterable confidence and affection.

De Witt, while he saw the political edifice his whole life had been devoted to building, crumbling at his feet, while he toiled with unremitting devotion at all the business of the State which devolved upon him, still strove during May and June to make peace with France and England. The terms asked by both countries were such as could only have been accepted by a craven people beaten to its knees. Though at sea de Ruyter had won a strategic victory over the united English and French fleets in the battle of Southwold Bay

[1] "I find myself here in the greatest perplexity in the world, inasmuch as I have only one regiment of 500 men to defend places at 3 hours' distance."—John Maurice to William III., June.

[2] Published in the original French by Groen van Prinsterer, *Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, S. II. vol. v.

(June 6), the outlook was desperate enough for the Dutch. All trade was suspended, all business at a standstill, part of their country was submerged and another part in the hands of the enemy. The appearance of the English Ambassadors at the Hague had raised hopes of an immediate peace, the popular disappointment was proportionate. The temper of the people was becoming increasingly dangerous. It was said that de Witt and his supporters in the Government had betrayed Holland to France. At the end of June an attempt was made to assassinate both de Witt and his brother Cornelius. At the beginning of July increasing popular tumults induced the States of Holland and Zealand to revoke the "Perpetual Edict" and proclaim William of Orange Stadtholder, Captain and Admiral-General.[1] But the restoration to the Prince of the dignities of his House came too late to satisfy the Orange mob. Their rage against de Witt and his brother increased in virulence, till in August it culminated in their murder, one of the basest and most ferocious which has stained the page of History. The verdict of impartial historians has exonerated William of Orange from every shade of complicity in the crime, but his memory is undeniably tarnished by his having taken no steps to punish the perpetrators.[2]

William at once assumed an attitude with regard to peace that seemed to the rest of Europe the blind foolhardiness of youth. In a speech to the States-General, that lasted more than two hours, he repudiated the offered terms uncompromisingly. The specious proposal that he should be made sovereign of Holland under the joint protectorate of England and France was no lure to him. His answer was always firm that he would never sell the liberties of his country that his ancestors had so long defended. His countrymen who listened to him were inspired with something of their Prince's heroic spirit; no cause is hopeless when there are unyielding will and unfaltering courage to defend it. The Peace terms of England and France were rejected. Yet there were some even among those of the Prince's own household who doubted

[1] Of the seven provinces, three, Guelderland, Overyssel and Utrecht, were in the hands of the enemy; in Friesland and Groningen the Stadtholdership was held by William of Nassau.

[2] It is only fair to remember that William showed himself equally indifferent to the punishment of the numerous assassins who made attempts on his own life. See Burnet's report of the Prince's conversations with him concerning de Witt's murder.

his adventure. Sir William Temple, firm friend and admirer of both the Prince and Bentinck, says :

" The game he played was then thought so desperate, that one of his nearest servants told me he had long expostulated it with his master, and asked him at last, how he pretended to live after Holland was lost, and whether he had thought so far ? The Prince told him he had, and that he was resolved to live upon the lands he had left in Germany, and that he would rather pass his life in hunting there, than sell his country or his liberty to France at any price." [1]

It was never the practice of Louis XIV. to risk tarnishing his military reputation, and he had retired before the rising waters of the North Sea in Holland and returned to France, leaving the Duke of Luxemburg in command of the French in Utrecht till such time as the winter frosts should enable him to advance across the flooded country to the Hague. This famous general was an early apostle of " Schrecklichkeit." " Go ! my children," he exhorted his soldiers, " plunder, murder, destroy, and if it be possible to commit yet greater cruelties, be not negligent therein, that I may see I am not deceived in my choice of the flower of the King's troops." [2] Happily for the Hague a timely thaw frustrated the French designs, besides, in the words of John Maurice, " some thousands drowned of their cavalry and infantry." The Duke himself had returned to Utrecht ill, from having fallen into the water which was " so furiously high " that neither roads, bridges nor ditches could be distinguished ; although the frost set in again the ice was rendered unsafe through the opening of the sluices. Those who care to pursue the by-paths of history should read the letters of John Maurice to the Prince of Orange at this period of the war, describing the sufferings of the troops from the lack of all necessaries, as their numbers dwindled away from disease and exposure, and discipline became ever more difficult to maintain. The events of the next three or four years may, however, be dismissed briefly as far as William Bentinck was concerned. Like many another young Dutchman he gained military experience in marches and counter-marches, in sieges and defence.

[1] Temple's *Memoirs*. [2] Sylvius.

WILLIAM III., PRINCE OF ORANGE (*circa* 1673).

Nearly ten years had now elapsed since William Bentinck first came to Court as a page, years passed in comparative obscurity since the burgher oligarchy that ruled Holland under de Witt's firm guidance had kept the Prince in strict tutelage. Their boyish friendship had been cemented by common tastes, interests and amusements, and by a certain similarity of character, though the Prince was always the more sensitive and emotional of the two. When William was removed from the guardianship of his devoted adherents the Zuylesteins to the austere supervision and cold scrutiny of the State, personified by John de Witt, Bentinck remained at his side, faithful, loyal, reticent. As they had grown to manhood, the Prince's trust in and affection for his friend and comrade had deepened ; and with the sudden elevation of the Prince to the position of an almost absolute ruler, that of William Bentinck became increasingly important and assured.

It soon appeared that the position of the United Provinces was not so desperate as it had seemed to onlookers in the summer of 1672. Everything had then depended on holding the waterline against Luxemburg in the north and Turenne in the south. The Prince of Waldeck, an experienced, but frequently unlucky, commander, was appointed a Field Marshal in the service of the States ; the Prince of Orange, though his first attempts at taking the initiative were unsuccessful, soon won the confidence of his troops and showed his enemies that he was an opponent to be respected. The next year, 1673, the position of the Netherlands began to improve. William of Orange won a definite success in the occupation of the important fortress of Naarden (September) from the French, and afterwards crossing the Rhine into Germany, took Bonn (November) with the help of some Imperial and Spanish troops, a loss which resulted in the evacuation of the Netherlands by the French. The recovered Provinces of Utrecht, Overyssel and Guelderland declared the Prince of Orange Stadtholder in grateful acknowledgment of his successful conduct of the war. The position of the Dutch continued to improve. The next year, 1674, the English Parliament forced Charles to conclude Peace with Holland (February 28) ; peace was also concluded with Münster (April), Cologne (May), and a Coalition was formed between the States, the Emperor, Spain, the Elector of Brandenburg, Denmark, and the Duke

of Brunswick-Lüneberg. Of this Coalition William of Orange was the linch-pin, as well as the inspiration. In August, at the head of an allied army of 70,000 men, he met the great Condé at Seneff, and though no decisive victory was gained, the Prince added greatly to his military reputation.

On the retirement of the Dutch into winter quarters William returned to the Hague, where Sir William Temple was waiting to see him as Ambassador Extraordinary charged with a twofold mission. Temple had been selected as the friend and admirer of the Prince personally, and his being sent was also a pledge of good faith on the part of the slippery English, for it was he who had negotiated the Triple Alliance. Temple was instructed to enter into a preliminary discussion as to the terms for general peace, and to broach the subject of a marriage between William and his cousin, the young Princess Mary, daughter of the Duke of York.

The Prince expressed himself with his usual frankness in conversation with the discreet emissary. "The States could not," he said, "with any faith or Honour make a separate peace upon any terms that France could offer them. 'Twere better going on with the war, let it last as long, and cost as much as it would," and he added that "His Majesty might if he pleased induce France to whatever he thought just." For the rest he said he thought the Allies "had as fair a game as the French."

On Temple's report Charles was so ill-advised as to send Arlington to Holland to succeed where Temple had failed. He was accompanied by his wife and her sister Madame Beverwaert, who was believed to be "very agreeable to the Prince," Sir Gabriel Sylvius, "who took himself to be in great credit in that Court . . . particularly with Mr. Bentinck," and the young Lord Ossory, who had also married into the Beverwaert family. These adroit emissaries were to put the Prince in a good humour and then a further bait was to be offered him, the hand of the Princess Mary.[1]

The characters of William's two uncles are nowhere more clearly shown than in the memoirs of the younger brother. One of the very few points of agreement between them was their common dislike of their nephew, and all he represented: Protestantism, patriotism, republicanism. He was besides considered to be the rallying point for the

[1] Clarke's *Life of James II.*, vol. i.

disaffected. His obstinate defiance of France was an obstacle not only in the path of Louis XIV. but in the peaceful development of the autocratic schemes of Charles and the fanatical projects of James. Both brothers were autocrats, but whereas James was an autocrat and a bigot, Charles's cold calculating mind always anticipated the point at which persistence in any course of action would react against his own personal convenience and security. His famous phrase that he "did not wish to go on his travels again" is the key to all the inconsistencies of his policy. Hence Charles reigned twenty-five years while James reigned for four. Neither of William's uncles wanted war, and they told the French Ambassador they wished their nephew a new punishment through which he would be at last inclined for peace,[1] but James by no means wished this "correction" to take the form of offering himself as a father-in-law. He protested as much as he dared against both the proposal and the manner in which it was conveyed: impotent protests that Charles, who was by far the stronger character of the two, brushed contemptuously aside. "It would look like too mean a condescension, and a too much seeking of the Prince of Orange to send such a person as Lord Arlington," James urged, but "all the Duke's reasons made no impression upon the King, for he had beforehand resolved the matter." A few days later, Charles remarked, as though the subject had previously escaped his memory, that Lord Ossory was to accompany Arlington to say something "which he knew the Duke would not be glad Lord Arlington should have anything to do with," which was, that if the Prince was to ask a price for peace, Lord Ossory was to reply "he knew the King and the Duke's mind so well that if the Prince of Orange did what was expected of him, he might then pretend to marry the Princess Mary and his addresses would be well received" by Mary's father, who however "thought it a very indecent thing to have a matter of that kind proposed to the Prince of Orange without his first seeking it."[2]

Temple not unnaturally looked askance at the irruption of the self-confident Arlington and his party into the delicate affair that had been entrusted to himself, and observed sardonically how Arlington offended the Prince more and

[1] Klopp, ii. p. 67.
[2] Clarke's *Life of James II.*, vol. i.

more deeply by his clumsy and bumptious arrogance. "It was as if he had taken himself for the Prince of Orange and him for Lord Arlington," said the disgusted Prince to Temple.

In the early spring of 1675 all the ferment of European strife was arrested by the sudden and dangerous illness of the Prince of Orange. The heart of the Coalition against France might at any moment cease to beat.

"While his illness lasted, and the event was doubtful, all was in suspense, and none of the parties engaged seem'd to have other notions or sentiments than what were raised by the hopes or fears of so important a life." After some days, during which the doctors could not diagnose the Prince's illness, smallpox declared itself, that then so fatal disease which struck down all those nearest and dearest to him, his father, his mother, and his wife. In those times the sudden illness and death of any conspicuous person was frequently attributed to poison, a convenient solution when it could not be attributed to any other cause. William's death would benefit too many people at that moment for him to run any risks, and he gave the English Ambassador the highest proof of his confidence, by refusing food except that which came from his house, so that Temple's Dutch friends warned him that if the Prince's illness were to be fatal, he must be prepared for the People's wreaking their vengeance on his Household and "tearing them all to pieces."

Meanwhile William's house was continuously surrounded by an anxious crowd, eager to hear the latest bulletin. But in twenty days, "owing to the great evenness of his temper and the constancy of his mind," the Prince had recovered—owing too, Temple might have added, to the unwearied and devoted nursing of his friend Bentinck. The Prince would take food from, or suffer himself to be moved in bed by, no other hand, and he afterwards told the Ambassador that "whether he slept or not, he could not tell, but in 16 days and nights he never called once that he was not answered by Monsieur Bentinck as if he was awake." As soon as the Prince was convalescent Bentinck begged leave to go home, for he "could hold up no longer." There falling ill of the same disease he was in great extremity, but recovered in

time to attend his master into the Field, "where he was ever next his person."

Well might Temple comment, "I cannot here forbear to give Monsieur Bentinck the character due to him, of the best servant I have ever known in Prince's or private family." Temple does not mention a tradition in the Bentinck family that on this occasion William Bentinck slept in the same bed as the Prince in accordance with the current belief that any person who caught smallpox directly from a patient caused the virulence of the attack to diminish in the first instance.

The Dutch suffered a heavy loss this year (1675) in the death of de Ruyter from wounds received in an engagement in the Mediterranean, where he had been dispatched to help the Spaniards quell a Sicilian revolt, despite his own strong representations as to the unfitness of the fleet for putting to sea.[1] On land there was no military event of great importance, though some light is thrown on the activities of William Bentinck by his preservation of his marching orders for this and the following years.[2]

France was now the only enemy, and in the spring of 1676 Louis XIV., fearing that England might join the Coalition against him, sought to detach the United Provinces [3] from it. The Dutch, weary of the indeterminate nature of the war on land, and the injury their commerce suffered at sea at the hands of French pirates, were anxious to make peace, but William was strongly opposed to the desertion of his allies, and though negotiations were opened at Nimeguen the war dragged on. Nevertheless the pressure was relieved, and William found leisure to avail himself of his authoritative position to bestow on William Bentinck one of the earliest public marks of his favour in the grant of Dreimele Manor. Bentinck preserved the little parchment among his papers and it is still in existence, stating that the Manor was given by the Prince of Orange to "Joncheer Willem Bentingh, Colonel of his Highness's Guards, in

[1] The death of Turenne was at least an equally disastrous loss to the French. July 1675.

[2] See Marching Orders, p. 50.

[3] The United Provinces, each with their own independent State Council, were not always agreed in matters of policy. Each State was represented by Deputies in the States-General which sat at the Hague. As Holland was the richest and most powerful among them, that State has given its name to the whole country, and it will be simpler in future to speak of Holland for the United Provinces, unless the State of Holland is meant as acting independently of or in opposition to them.

recognition of the long and good services rendered by him to his person." [1] The family archives also note that his sister the Baroness Eleonora Bentinck was married in the October of this year to Baron Robert of Ittersum, Lord of Nyenhuis and Commander of the Deutschen Ordens-Ballei of Utrecht. Among the scarce personal records at this period of William Bentinck's life it is interesting to find a long and intimate letter addressed to him by John Maurice of Nassau. The strain of anxiety, and the hardships incidental to war, had broken down the gallant old soldier, and he had been forced to retire to the Hague. As long as he was able he disregarded his doctor's orders, but was at last obliged to apply for leave to the Prince : " finding myself from day to day more feeble and attacked by seventy years which bring with them all kinds of onslaughts." Having escaped a watery grave at Muyden, the brave old man's last years were happily occupied by the arts of peace. He writes from Cleves, March 26, 1677 :

" Sir,—My greatest hope was to come and kiss the hand of His Highness our dear master at Wesel, which to my great regret I am prevented from doing ; also to make you jealous by showing you what I have done in six months, where you work whole years. I have wished a thousand times that his Highness had this situation at Soesdyck. There are mountains, fields, meadows, a beautiful river and a pretty brook, which never runs dry, where I have made five or six cascades, in fine, a place with which I know well you would be in love. If you are curious I will send you the plan. If you care to order the architect Rust to come and see me here one of these days, I will show him the things of which His Highness might make use at Soesdyck and you at Sorghvliet. Me recommandant à vos bonnes graces, and wishing you every kind of happiness and a happy return."

In the spring of 1677 Bentinck left for England on a special mission to Charles II. as the Prince's representative, undertaking in this the first of the embassies in which he appears as a person of national and European importance. The Prince was induced to take this step by a combination of

[1] Egerton MSS.

circumstances. The Dutch were increasingly averse from the continuance of a costly and indecisive war, but the conflicting claims of the Allies appeared irreconcilable. William was determined not to leave them in the lurch by making a separate peace with France ; it was a step opposed alike to his sense of honour and his policy. Four years of war against France had taught him a lesson of which he never lost sight, that England was the make-weight essential to the European balance of power against France. He therefore sought on the one part to induce Charles to join the Coalition, and on the other to strengthen his own position by a marriage with his young cousin Mary Stuart, heiress apparent to the English throne. A way for these delicate negotiations had already been made by a conversation with Temple the Prince had held in the gardens of Honslaerdijk.[1] With his usual directness William came at once to the point.

As the only surviving member of his family, marriage had been frequently urged upon him by his friends. He had put aside such thoughts during the war, but the Deputies of the States, in view of its continuance, pressed him more earnestly every day to think of taking a wife, and he thought with good reason. He was therefore resolved to marry. The Prince asked Temple's opinion on two points, not, as he expressly added, in Temple's character of Ambassador, but in that of a friend. On the one hand the many influential persons in England who would have engaged him to head the opposition to the conduct of the Court in the war, held that a marriage alliance would make it appear that he was in the interests of the Court, and would forfeit all the following he would otherwise have had there.

The second point on which the Prince was anxious for reassurance was " upon the person and dispositions of the young lady." It was not for a Prince to appear too concerned about such a matter, yet for his part " no circumstance of fortune or interest could engage him without those of the person, especially those of humour and dispositions. He might perhaps not be very easy for a wife to live with . . . if he should meet with one to give him trouble at Home 'twas what he should not be able to bear, who was like to have

[1] A pleasure house, " lust huis," near Naaldwijk in the west, built by Prince Frederick Henry in 1629. It was afterwards the favourite summer residence of the Princess Mary. Constantyn Huygens the Elder writes to William about water for it, 1674. Vol. vi. p. 353.

enough abroad in the course of his life." Hence if Temple knew anything particular of the Lady Mary he desired him to tell him freely.

Temple replied on both counts like the accomplished Ambassador and honest man he was. In the first place, he assured the Prince that the misunderstandings and troubles between Charles and his people had been greatly exaggerated, and that a marriage alliance with the Court of England would strengthen the position of the Prince by bringing him one degree nearer the crown—in all appearance the next. Of the Lady Mary herself the Ambassador could say nothing, but added that he had always heard his wife and sister speak in the highest terms possible of so young a Princess, especially of the report of her governess with whom they had a particular friendship.

On the conclusion of this conversation, which lasted for two hours, the Prince declared his intention of entering at once upon his suit; and Lady Temple, who was then returning to England, was entrusted with letters to Charles and the Duke of York asking their consent, and permission for the Prince to come to England on the conclusion of the campaign. To this end Bentinck was ordered to precede his master, receiving detailed instructions from him, of which he made careful notes, not, as might have been expected, in Dutch, but in a colloquial French, to some extent individual to the writers and common to the whole correspondence between them. The notes begin with an involved compliment which seems to have been taken down verbatim. Literally translated, it runs as follows: "His Highness sends me to assure his Majesty of his very humble respects and submission; and to receive his orders touching his conduct. His Highness hopes that his Majesty will have the goodness to show him some marks of that kindness of which he has so often graciously assured him in the present crisis, when he can do it so usefully." Then follows categorically a list of the points to be discussed.

In the first place, the Ambassador is to learn from his Majesty in what manner his Highness (the Prince of Orange) should conduct himself in all respects during the continuation of the war with a view to the possible approach of peace. Secondly, the Prince declares himself persuaded that his Majesty desires peace, and that notwithstanding the reasons that would incline him for his own part to prefer the

continuation of the war, yet he has no aversion to peace, and in this respect he submits very willingly to the King's wishes. On the contrary, he would wish the war ended; but finds it difficult to believe that France, having won so great an advantage, would resolve to grant a peace on acceptable conditions. And after these disadvantages, he on his part would like the power to repair his misfortunes before the end of the war.

These statements were to be elaborated still further in conversation, for in a marginal note opposite the second paragraph of his instructions Bentinck has inserted the remark, "raisons pour la guerre, qu'en cas qu'elle ne soit avantage qu'il i aura des brouilleries à craindre dans nostre pais" ("reasons for war, in case it should not be advantageous there will be troubles to be feared in our country").

William had stated frankly on more than one occasion that Charles II. had it in his power to dictate a peace on honourable terms when he would; consequently it was not his rôle to appear too anxious for peace except on satisfactory conditions.

Thirdly, Son Altesse wishes to know on what conditions his Majesty considers peace should be made, in order that he may endeavour to induce the Allies to agree to them.[1]

Fourthly, the Prince's orders were that Bentinck should not discuss the terms of peace, being only sent on behalf of the Prince to his Majesty in order to receive his commands.

Fifthly, the Low Countries are in so evil a plight (meschant estat) that it is quite impossible that they can continue to exist, except with the help of his Majesty. Without the restitution of six or seven towns, among which are Valenciennes, Tournay, Courtray, Oudenarde, Ath, Charleroy, it is impossible that this country can maintain or make use of a barrier.

If the Ambassador finds Charles II. not merely willing to act as a mediator and exert his influence to obtain terms of peace favourable to his nephew and his allies, but even to go further, and throw the weight of that influence into the scale against France, then Bentinck is to act upon the sixth point in his instructions, and to assure the King that his Highness desires nothing more ardently than to see his Majesty engaged on their side, and as a proof of it the Prince

[1] "Faire condescendre les Alliéz aus volontéz de sa Majesté!"

wishes to know the price of his uncle's alliance, in order that he may set about obtaining it for him.

In case the King were to suggest, for instance, the siege of Wynonberque and Dunkirk, these places should be delivered into his hands when taken.

Eighthly, if the King alludes to the misrepresentations that have been made to him with regard to his nephew's sentiments towards himself, Bentinck is earnestly to reassure him of the Prince's continued attachment to his person and interests.

Finally, in order to efface any kind of evil suspicions that might still linger in the King's mind, his Highness begs that after the campaign he may receive permission to visit England.

With these instructions committed to writing, Bentinck arrived in England about the beginning of June. There is a noteworthy omission in them ; no mention is made of the marriage alliance, the second object of William's proposed visit. That was to be made conditional on satisfactory terms of peace. This was the crux of the matter, though Bentinck discreetly sought to ingratiate himself not only with the King but with the Duke of York, who evidently has no kindness either for his nephew or his emissary.

The Duke's record of the interview testifies to the fidelity with which Bentinck had carried out his instructions.[1]

"The Prince of Orange sent hither M. Benting, the person he most confided in, to make great professions of duty and service to his Majesty, and to assure him he would wholly put himself into his hands and follow his counsell and direction both as to Peace and War ; but he hoped his Majesty would consider his honour, and not consider anything which might be contrary to it."

The Duke's biographer adds contemptuously that—

"He [M. Benting] also made great professions to the Duke for the Prince his nephew, to which the Duke answered [equivocally] that he should always have that kindness for his nephew which both his own merit and the interests of the Royal Family, which chiefly consists

[1] *Life of James II.*, vol. i. 504.

in being united, required from him. Upon further discourse he told Monsieur Benting, that he must not look on his Ma^ties unwillingness to enter into a war, as proceeding from any other reasons but self-preservation; for he foresaw the absolute ruine of the Royale Family, if he should embarke himself in a war in the condition he was now in, his magazins being empty, his fleet not in a good condition, and above all the Parliament being in such a temper, that all he could do at present was to keep things quiet at home. That should his Majesty be engaged in a foreign war, what would they not attempt, when he should be so much in their power for maintaining it, and what would not the Republican party then do, when so fair an occasion for their purpose was thus offered them."

William in Holland meanwhile anxiously waited for a report from his Ambassador. News was long in coming by the slow and often difficult cross-Channel journey of those days. His first letter to Bentinck, dated June 11, is written from Antwerp and begins: "I hope that this will find you safely arrived in London, about which I am very anxious, having received no news of you since your departure." The news of the prorogation of Parliament [1] had, however, reached Holland, for the Prince continues in his involved French:

"Vous aurez trouve en arrivant en Engleterre les affaires sont sur un autre pied qu'elles n'estaient quandt vous estes parti, je suis fort aise que vous l'esties avant que j'eus la nouvelle de la prorogation de Parliment, puis-que le Roy vaira que mon intention n'est autre que de s'addresse directement a luy, en quel estat que les affaires puissent estre."—"On arriving in England you will have found that affairs there are on another footing from that which they were on when you

[1] NOTE.—In order to paralyse the action of the English Parliament in declaring war against himself, Louis XIV. had bribed Charles II. to prorogue it from November 1675 till February 1677. When the Commons reassembled they voted a grant for the Navy, but it was to be paid into the hands of their own receivers. They passed an address to the King to save the Netherlands, but after an army had been raised, they were fearful of the use to which it might be put, and demanded that it should be disbanded. Louis XIV. afterwards enabled Charles by a further subsidy to again prorogue Parliament till April 1678.

left. I am very glad that you were there before I had the news of the prorogation of Parliament, since the King will see I have no other intention than that of addressing myself directly to himself whatever the position of affairs."

The Prince wishes this point emphasised at Court, and expresses a hope that Charles may do more for "our party" than if his hand had been forced by Parliament, and in conclusion he drops into the tone of intimate affection that characterises so many of the letters: and urges Bentinck's speedy return:

"Je vous prie qu'elle puisse estre aussi promte qu'il sera *auqunement* possible cependant n'oublier pas G. n'y les promesses que vous luy avait fait."—"I pray you that it may be as soon as can *in any way* possible be managed. However do not forget G— nor the promises that you made him."

What were the promises that Bentinck made to Guillaume —that his one trusted friend would remain "ever near his person," in Temple's phrase? The use of the French form of his name and never the Dutch is invariable, and the letters are often signed with a small G., but whereas William's letters bear the marks of haste, the handwriting is often large and hurried, words are scratched through, or spelt phonetically, and pages are written across, those of Bentinck preserve a certain formality.

The Prince wrote again on June 15, though he hoped that Bentinck would have left London before he could receive it.

"I wished to write to you, however," he continues, "on the chance, to tell you in what anxiety I have been since, up till this afternoon, having neither any news of you since your departure, nor knowing where nor when you embarked which induced me yesterday to send an express to Ostend in order to know the truth who has just reported to me that you went on Friday morning, and according to the report of a naval captain, who was with his frigate at Dunkirk that you arrived on Saturday morning at Dover." And he concludes with an urgent entreaty to his friend to return: "Si

par hazard cette lettre vous trouve encore à Londres, je vous prie de ne pas perdre un moment de temps à revenir."

This letter must have crossed one from Bentinck written on the same date from :

"Whytehalle. June 15.

"I am in despair that up till the present I have not been able to use more diligence in the execution of your Highness's orders. Contrary winds detained me two nights and three days at sea "—the reassuring naval captain at Dunkirk had then been misinformed—" so much so that I only arrived on the evening of the day before yesterday at Margate, from whence I took post and arrived yesterday afternoon. I had the honour of paying my court to the King and the Duke the same evening. The King expressed much satisfaction with the behaviour of your Highness ; and I believe that when I can have the honour of telling you the expressions of affection and of kindness with which the King and M. le Duq replied to what I said to them on your behalf—I believe that your Highness will have reason to be entirely satisfied."

If this refers to the guarded and equivocal expressions of civility on the part of James, Mr. Bentinck was easily pleased. Charles no doubt was more cordial, he was never chary of agreeable non-committal civilities.

Bentinck goes on to say that so far he has only spoken to the King in public, and has not yet enlarged upon any points except that of his master's health.

"I will try to acquit myself," he continues, "as well as my small capacity will permit on the points with which your Highness has entrusted me. All my trouble is the fear that I shall not be able to be as expeditious as I could wish in returning to 'témoigner à vostre Altesse le regret que j'ay d'estre si longtemps absent de sa vue puisque mon plus grand contentement est de lui rendre mes respects estant à elle comme je le suis' ('testify to your Highness the regret I feel in being so long absent from your presence since my greatest happiness is to render my respects to you, being to your Highness what I am')."

Bentinck's second letter to William is written on June 18, after he has received that of the Prince from Antwerp. It is less formal than the first. He has now had time to acquaint himself with the political situation in England, and writes with a kind of suppressed eagerness which renders his French more than ever involved. He expresses himself as "ravished" at having received the Prince's Antwerp letter which had reached him that evening, and continues:

"On arriving I found matters in quite a different position from what I had expected (dans une toute autre assiette que je n'avois cru) owing to the adjournment of Parliament and the dissatisfaction of the King and the Duke with its proceedings, full of ill-considered zeal which has done so much harm, that we must not expect good for our cause. This has made the King resolve not to enter upon the first point about which your Highness had ordered me to approach him. As to the second, in my opinion, the too great desire to obtain it has caused such great mistakes on the part of those who are obliged to work in exact accordance with their instructions without exceeding them that it will be very difficult to succeed."

The meaning of this sentence is obscure, but it seems to indicate that Bentinck had been given a certain licence in the exercise of his own judgment in conducting the negotiations with Charles II., for he continues that in spite of his own incapacity he has striven, in accordance with what he knew to be the Prince's views, and without committing him, to prevent Charles II. from making proposals that would only be rejected by his master, thus rendering his journey entirely useless. He hopes to have an answer from Charles in two or three days. In conclusion Bentinck hopes that his Highness "remembers a faithful servant absent by your orders, and that you will be persuaded that I shall never forget all my life, nor that which I have promised." [1]

One more letter, the last of this series, was written by William on June 22 from Lockeren commanding Bentinck's immediate return.

The Prince is distressed to hear that Bentinck was so long at sea, and that he is not yet able to return. He

[1] See letter from William of June 11, p. 40.

hopes at least that this letter will not find him still in London, "but if so," he concludes, "it is my imperative wish that you should return without allowing any consideration to prevent you" ("je veus absolument que vous revenir sans qu'aucune consideration vous en empêche")—for reasons, the Prince adds, that he will tell Bentinck when he sees him. He will march in a few days and will be greatly vexed if Bentinck has not arrived by that time. There is no clue to the motive for these peremptory commands, but the Ambassador obeyed them, and the letter concluded the series relating to this business.

In October William went to England himself to complete the work that Bentinck had begun. He was suspected of treason to the Allies he told Krampricht the Imperial Ambassador at the Hague,[1] but he only undertook this journey by request of the King of England [2] in order to see what he could accomplish for his fatherland in the first place, and the Allies in the second. He did not hope for the entry of the King of England into the war. He did not hope for an advantageous peace, he only hoped, in accordance with the imperative wish of the Republic for peace, to obtain one that should be as little injurious as possible.

Nothing was said in this conversation as to the personal object of the Prince's visit. There was talk in diplomatic circles at this time of the proposed marriage of the Princess Mary and the Dauphin, an alliance that would have been disastrous to William's schemes of a European coalition against France which should include England. He wished the affair of his marriage to be settled first; and the question of Charles II.'s intervention in obtaining such a peace as should secure Flanders, and consequently Holland, from being overrun by the French was to be discussed afterwards.

The Prince landed at Harwich with his suite and went straight to Newmarket, where Charles was staying at the time. Fortunately he shared his uncle's taste for horses and horse racing, and many years later raced his own horses on the windy heath above the little town. Of Charles's Palace at Newmarket little now remains, except the staircase, whose massive panelling and finely carved balusters testify to the ancient dignities of the house. Near at hand was the cock-pit, where Charles was accustomed to divert himself in the

[1] Dispatches, October 13–16, 1677.
[2] He was invited by Charles II. through Lawrence Hyde, September 1677.

intervals of racing, going and coming familiarly among his people with easy good humour, and an inborn art of popularity to which William could never attain.

The old Palace of Charles II. was rebuilt in 1670, and it is most probable that the staircase was the main staircase of the building, not as local tradition asserts the back stairs. The house is now used as a second-hand furniture shop, whose picturesque frontage obviously dates from the Queen Anne period. Evelyn speaks of it as being

" meane, and hardly fit for a hunting house. Many of the rooms above had the chimnies placed in the angles and corners, a mode now introduced by his Majesty, which I do at no hand approve of. . . . Besides this house is placed in a dirty streete, without any court or avenue, like a common one, whereas it might and ought to have been built at either end of the towne, upon the very carpet where the sports are celebrated." [1]

The autumn was the great Newmarket season. Even in those days thousands of spectators assembled there. Into this scene of gaiety and frivolity came William, fresh from the hardships of a campaign, preoccupied with anxieties for the future of his country and the successful accomplishment of the immediate ends in view. The first of those ends was soon attained, " after some days spent in the outward ceremony of entertainment "—days during which William lost no time and no opportunity—" at last the obstinacy of the Prince of Orange, assisted by the Lord Treasurer, prevailed upon the flexibility of the King "—it is Charles's brother speaking—" to let the marriage be first agreed and concluded." Having got the King's consent, William approached the bride's father. It is easy to imagine how repugnant such a marriage would be to James ; a Roman Catholic, an autocrat, a believer in the Divine Right of Kings, he could hardly be expected to look kindly on a Protestant son-in-law who represented a militant Republic. In all their subsequent correspondence, which was fairly frequent : " On voie souvent à travers les dehors de la bienveillance percer le dissentiment, la mauvaise humeur, le soupçon." [2]

[1] *Evelyn's Diary.*
[2] Groen van Prinsterer, vol. v. s. ii.

For his part the Prince did his best to conciliate his uncle; he now called on him "about an affair which was the chief cause of his coming over, and which was to desire that he might have the happiness to be yet nearer related to him by marrying the Lady Mary." The Duke, whom one can fancy rather stiff and offended, put him off with the ambiguous civility that "he had all the esteem for him he deserved, or could desire"; but declined to discuss the matter till the pending negotiations for peace were concluded. William, with characteristic reticence, refrained from betraying Charles's confidence on this occasion, so that it was not till the same evening that James learned to his still greater vexation that the marriage proposal had been made to him by the Prince with his brother's cognizance and permission. James, naturally feeling that he had been put in a foolish and undignified position, ventured to object to the King rather pettishly: "that he could have wished his Majesty had been pleased to have acquainted him beforehand with his mind," on which Charles impatiently "broke off short," and said he would speak to him of it another time.

On the return of the Court to Whitehall the betrothal was announced and the marriage articles drawn up in three days. If the bride's father was averse, the bride herself was no less so. The Princess Mary's childhood had been principally spent at Richmond under the care of her governess, Lady Frances Villiers. She was now a beautiful girl of sixteen, and when she learned that she was to marry her cousin immediately and return with him to Holland, "she wept all that afternoon and the following day." William can hardly have appeared in the guise of a lover to a young girl accustomed to the atmosphere of a gay Court. He was twelve years older than Mary, spoke her language imperfectly, and even at such a moment made no pretence of regarding her as anything but a factor in the game of politics. The Court remarked on his "sullennesse or clownishness that he took no notice of his Princesse at the Play or ball nor came to see her at St. James." As for Mary, she had not even the small consolation of knowing how very much worse off she would have been in marrying the Dauphin. It appears, however, that Mr. Bentinck made better use of his opportunities on this occasion, and found leisure to cultivate social amenities. There was, of course, any amount of gossip at Court on the subject of the approaching marriage,

and quite a number of young ladies saw in it a possible means of establishing themselves. Henry Saville,[1] writing on November 1, from Whitehall, to Mary's uncle, the Earl of Rochester, says :

"It were worth your while to see how the old ladies, and the young beggarly bitches are all sueing for places about the Princess of Orange (who is to be the next week). My Lady Arabella Macarty and my Lady Elizabeth Delaval take it monstrous ill not to be ladies of the bed-chamber, which they say is like to be disposed of to my Lady Inchquin, and Bentinck's wife, when he has one, and hee does endeavour that Mademoiselle Beverwaert should be that happy woman."

There is no clue as to whether Mr. Bentinck put his fortunes to the test on this occasion. Had he done so he would have become connected with the House of Orange by marriage. The Beverwaerts were descended from Prince Maurice of Orange-Nassau, great uncle of William III. Isabella van Beverwaert was the wife of Lord Arlington, another sister married Lord Ossory, and a third Lord Balcarres. Their family is often mentioned, especially Odijk and his younger brother Ouwkerk. Lady Inchquin actually accompanied the Princess to Holland. She was the wife of the second Earl of Inchquin.

The Prince's wedding took place on November 4, in the bride's bed-chamber, at nine o'clock. The ceremony was performed by Bishop Compton, who had been entrusted with the care of Mary's religious education. "The King, who gave her away, was very pleasant all the while." The next day William sent Bentinck to the Princess with £40,000 worth of jewels as his wedding gift.

Having gained his point [2] the Prince was anxious to return home, but their departure was delayed for some time by contrary winds, and only took place in the beginning of December. Mary was accompanied by the two daughters of her former governess, Anne and Elizabeth Villiers. Their mother, Lady Frances Villiers, who had lately died, was the

[1] Brother of the Marquis of Halifax, the "trimmer."

[2] Charles II. had promised his support to the conditions of peace offered by the Allies to France, and his adherence to the Coalition if Louis did not accept them.

daughter of the second Earl of Suffolk, Theophilus Howard. The younger sister Anne had been Mary's playfellow at Richmond when they were children together, and it was not long before William Bentinck transferred the attention he had been paying to Mademoiselle Beverwaert to her. One cannot help feeling that Bentinck, though he was a year older than the Prince, must have seemed almost mercurial compared to him. He was one of a large family, and occasionally condescended to practical jokes. The Prince, with "his countenance composed to gravity and authority," [1] solemn and serious, "seldom cheerful and but with a few," taciturn and aloof, must indeed have made a formidable bridegroom. His one passion was hunting, and in that his wife did not share.

The weather continued so unpropitious even after the wedding party had left London that the Duke of York sent after the Prince begging him to leave "the yaughts at Gravesend" and return to Whitehall. They sailed from Margate, however. Droste was among the crowd assembled at the Hague to welcome the Prince and Princess on their return. Mary must have dried her tears, for she made a good impression:

> "There I saw their arrival driving in through the streets
> In a gilded coach, wherein they both sat
> There the Maid of Honour Lady Inchquin sat opposite
> Who had the case on her lap with the jewels.
> She [Mary] was beautiful young, wise and was praised by all
> And her high lineage was to be traced in her bearing
> Fame has spread her vertues abroad through the world
> Truth, temperance faith love and piety." [2]

Time only deepened this first favourable impression, seldom if ever has a Princess been more universally and deservedly beloved of her people.

The Duke of York, betraying a not unnatural anxiety on his daughter's behalf, wrote to his unwelcome son-in-law. "I long very much to hear of your being landed, and pray believe you shall always find me as kind to you as you can expect."

[1] Burnet, *History of His Own Time.* [2] Droste.

Lady Frances Howard = Sir E. Villiers

Elizabeth Villiers = The Earl of Orkney	Edward Villiers Earl of Jersey	Anne = William Bentinck 1678, died 1688

The marriage was at first by no means popular. In England the Prince was identified with his two uncles; in Holland it was murmured that he had come to such a good understanding with them and with France, that he would suppress the liberties of the Republic and make himself King.[1]

After his return to Holland in November Mr. Bentinck, though not quite so precipitate as the Prince, made such good use of his opportunities about the Court, that in February of the next year his marriage with Anne Villiers was celebrated at the Hague. There are no details relating to it except such as are afforded by the marriage settlement, which begins: "Au nom de Dieu nostre unique Sauveur Jesus Christ Amen." It is written in French and states that Anne Villiers's marriage portion is two thousand pounds sterling, which becomes the property of her husband. He is, however, required to furnish his wife with a sufficient sum to maintain her condition and quality. William III. settled on the bride an annuity of 8000 florins. The marriage settlement was signed at the Court at the Hague by the Prince and Princess, the bride and bridegroom and Lady Inchquin.[2]

The year 1678 saw the conclusion at Nimeguen of the long-deferred peace with France.[3] Charles II. had promised his support to the peace terms offered by the Allies to France and his adherence to the Coalition if they were rejected by Louis XIV., and a Treaty to this effect was signed in January 1678 after the return of William and Mary to Holland in December.

But the Dutch now knew how little the English King was to be trusted, a distrust in which William was to some extent involved.[4] The Peace Party, headed by Amsterdam

[1] Waldstein, Imperial Ambassador in London, reported that the Prince's journey was inadvisable and not without danger to him of some public affront from the excited people. The fact that the Prince's marriage was one object of the journey had not been made public, and even the Pensionary Fagel denied the rumours of it when questioned concerning it by Ambassadors at the Hague; and in conversation with one of them afterwards, he attributed the precipitancy with which it had been concluded to the danger of a marriage alliance between Mary and the Dauphin.

[2] Egerton MSS., vol. i. 708, f. 1.

[3] Peace negotiations had been begun at Nimeguen in the summer of 1676.

[4] Louis XIV. skilfully fomented their apprehensions of the Prince's autocratic pretensions.

and including the leading Dutch statesmen,[1] represented the general feeling in the country. Thus when Louis XIV. offered terms to the States-General on the basis of an advantageous treaty of commerce, the Peace Party was powerful enough to conclude a six weeks' truce with France on June 1, in spite of the opposition of the Prince, who remained loyal to his Allies. Luxemburg was meanwhile besieging Mons, and William waited impatiently for the truce to elapse in order to march to the relief of the town. At the last moment the French plenipotentiary at Nimeguen agreed to sign the Treaty. The news reached William on August 13, but only unofficially, and the next day he forced Luxemburg to fight at St. Denis. The battle was indecisive, but it prevented the surrender of Mons.

The Prince has been accused of fighting the battle of St. Denis with the Peace of Nimeguen in his pocket, for the news of its conclusion was made public next day. "I can assure you before God," he wrote to the Pensionary Fagel after the battle, "that I have only to-day learned of the conclusion of Peace," and the verdict of history has accepted the word of an honourable gentleman, who was too good a general to throw away the life of a single soldier.

William Bentinck seized the first moment after the battle to send a hurried note to his wife:

"From the Camp of St. Denis
this 15th early in the morning.

"This only serves to accompany my adjutant, whom I send to you to inform you of a very great and bloody battle which took place here after dinner, in order that you may assure Madame the Princess of the perfect health of His Highness. I will inform you more fully of what has passed, and I will write to you more at large when my weariness will permit me. Adieu." [2]

In those days of suspense and rumours and slow-travelling news, welcome indeed must have been the arrival of the weary, dusty dispatch rider bearing the few reassuring lines in the familiar, large, level handwriting.

[1] *E.g.* van Beuningen, who had been Ambassador in England, the Pensionary Fagel, and van Beverninck who represented Holland in the States-General.

[2] Add. MSS. 15902, f. 93.

Spain acquiesced in the Treaty of Nimeguen, but the other allies, Denmark and Brandenburg and the Emperor protested bitterly at the perfidy of Holland in deserting them. The Emperor made terms next year in 1679. Hardly had the Peace of Nimeguen been signed when Charles II., alarmed at the humour of his Parliament and people, and the outbreak of the Popish Plot,[1] sent over Lawrence Hyde, brother-in-law to the Duke of York, with a proposal for an offensive war against France. "Was ever anything so hot and so cold as this Court of yours?" exclaimed the Prince to Temple, and added bitterly: "If this dispatch had come twenty days ago, it had changed the face of affairs in Christendom; and the war might have been carried on till France had yielded to the Treaty of the Pyrenees [2] and left the world in quiet for the rest of our lives."

From Bentinck's Marching Orders, June 1675.

"Le Marche pour le 13 Juin.[3]

"La Cour logera à L'Abbaye d'Everboden et le village de Dissel, avec les gardes des corps, et le Regiment des gardes de cavallerie, on passera sur le pont Rotzelaer et passera le Demer à Arshot.

"Le Bagage de S. A. marchera devant l'artillerie.

"L'Artillerie marchera à la pointe du jour vers Weghteren ou elle passera le pont du Demer, lequel on fera visiter, comme aussi le chemin, et de là l'artillerie prendra la route d'Arschot et campera à Veldonck.

"*L'Infanterie.*

"La première ligne et le regiment des gardes passeront sur le Pont, qui est mis sur le Dÿle devant le quartier et prenderont la route pour passer à Sichen le Demer, et camperont là à environs. Il faut passer à Cortrick, St. Pieters-roy, Nau-roy Navare, lequel il faut laisser à droit, à Rullard, et de là à Sichen.

"La seconde ligne marchera et passera le pont, qu'on a fait sur le Dÿle vers le moulin de Wegchmale, et passera

[1] Temple's *Memoirs*.

[2] In the Treaty of the Pyrenees Louis XIV.'s wife, the Infanta Maria Theresa, renounced her right to the Spanish throne.

[3] Marching Orders for the Prince of Orange's Army, 1675–1678. Egerton MSS., vol. 1704.

à Wesemale et de là à Arschot pour passer le Demer et campera là à l'environs.

" Le Bagage suivra après que les deux lignes seront marchèes, et viendra là mesme route, et marcher selon le rang de chaque regiment, selon le rang dans sa Brigade.

" *La Cavellerie.*

" La cavallerie du roy passera à Louvain et sur un pont qu'elle fera par dessus la ville et prendra la route pour passer le Demer a Diesl et campera là.

" Le cavallerie de S. A. passera le pont à Haght et prendra la route de L'Abbaye d'Everboden, et campera cette nuit là à environs de l'artillerie un esquadron, et les autres viendront au quartier.

" Les dragons prendront le grand chemin de leur quartier à Arschot là ou on monstrera, ils marcheront à my-nuit, à fin qu'ils soyent passés avant que l'Infanterie passe.

" Les quartremaistres de la Cavellerie se trouveront au pont de Hayht à cinq heures du matin.

" Les quartremaistres de la première ligne de l'Infanterie se trouveront au de là le pont du Demer à Sichen à neuf heures du matin pour y attrendre le quartrem^{tre} gnal.

" Les quartremaistres de la seconde ligne se trouveront au de là le pont du Demer à Arschot pour y attendre le quartrem^{tre} general."

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CHAPTER III.—1678–1684

COURT LIFE IN HOLLAND—BENTINCK'S VISIT TO ENGLAND AFTER THE RYE HOUSE PLOT

During the spring of 1678 there were hopes that an heir would be born to the Prince of Orange. Such an event would have placed him in a far stronger position with regard to England, and would have strengthened his hands in the struggle against the aggressive ambitions [1] of Louis XIV. which the Peace of Nimeguen had but intermitted. A famous Dutch doctor of that day, Jacob Sena, was engaged to attend on the Princess. All was made ready down to the cradle; but these hopes proved fruitless, greatly to the disappointment of all at the Hague, and to the confusion of Sena, who had been mistaken in his diagnosis.[2] It was a bitter blow for the Prince, but his disappointment can have been nothing to that of Mary, who knew too well the difference that a son would have made to her own relationship to her husband. The disappointment cast a gloom over the little Court at the Hague. James, her father, wrote (1679 April 19th London): "I was very sorry to find by the letters of this day from Holland that my daughter had miscarried; pray let her be carefuller of herself another time." [3]

A happier fortune befell Madame Bentinck in the next year when her eldest child was born and called Mary, after the Princess of Orange, who was warmly interested in the family of her own old playfellow and her husband's friend, and showed great kindness to them in after years. In the autumn Madame Bentinck was attacked by some kind of infectious fever, and fell very seriously ill. Her husband's deep concern and anxiety are reflected in the letters the Prince wrote him on this occasion, letters whose urgent summons cannot tear him from her side. If William Bentinck

[1] "Cette ambition inquiète, vaine, et sans scrupule qui . . . a attiré sur la France le resentiment de l'Europe."—Groen van Prinsterer.

[2] Droste, L. 5210: 1678.

[3] Dalrymple's *Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. i. appendix i. 209.

was a loyal and devoted friend, he was an equally loyal and faithful husband. The first of the series is dated from the Prince's hunting lodge at Dieren. It was written at ten at night on August 9, and begins: "I have waited till this hour, in the hope of having some news of you to learn the state of health of Madame vostre femme." After hoping that she is better and expressing himself greatly distressed—"extrêmement marri"—to learn that the fever had also attacked William Bentinck's mother and sister, the Prince continues:

"God grant that they are now better and that you may return as soon as possible. It is impossible to express to you with what grief I left you this morning, and how much I was touched at seeing you in the state in which you were, and in what anxiety. I do not know how to live without you, and if I have ever felt that I love you it is to-day. I adjure you to return immediately Mme vostre femme is out of danger. It is impossible to express how vexatious your absence is to me. If you cannot be here by to-morrow evening, I will come to see you the day after, as it is impossible to me to be any longer absent from you when you are in such distress."

Madame Bentinck's illness was of long duration after the crisis of the fever was passed, for nearly a month later the Prince was writing from Dieren (September 6) in answer to a letter from Bentinck conveying better news of his wife's progress. He replied:

"I write with tears of joy in my eyes on seeing from your letter, that I have just received at my levée, that Madame vostre femme is better, and since the fever is diminished and there is no relapse I believe her to be quite out of danger."

In conclusion the Prince urges Bentinck's return. He seems, however, to have been prematurely optimistic, and to have subsequently received disquieting news, for he writes a few days later from Hooghzoete that he wishes to come to see Madame Bentinck, but if his friend would rather not, he will go straight on. If Bentinck wishes

him to come he is to send his calesche to Deventer. If not, the Prince begs him to be at Soestdyck punctually at nine o'clock on Monday, as he cannot well leave later, for he must see M. le Pensionary (Fagel) at the Hague the same evening. He adds that it is impossible to express the grief that the letter has given him, or the concern that he is in.

Apparently Mr. Bentinck contented himself with sending a letter to his master after some delay, as all other claims of duty and affection were subordinated to his anxiety over a fresh crisis of his wife's illness, for the Prince writes again later on the same day from Hooghzoete in what is for him an unusual tone of irritation. He concludes from the fact that Bentinck does not wish him to come to Nyenhuys that his wife is better, and continues :

"I am going on to Soestdyck at once in extreme displeasure at having to pass the night in a calesche, and at having to wait till now before arriving at Soestdyck, and having done all this only in the hope of seeing you and Madame vostre femme, you can judge if I have not a good reason for annoyance. And assuredly I shall be in despair if I don't see you to-morrow."

And concluding on a softer note the Prince asks Mr. Bentinck to assure his wife that nobody in the world has more compassion for her sufferings than himself.

It is to some extent possible to reconstruct the life at the Dutch Court during these more settled years of William Bentinck's career, its intrigues, in which he was indirectly implicated, the amusements and festivities in which he and his wife shared. A faint aroma of its atmosphere exhales from old letters and diaries, and there emerge portraits of the men and women with whom Bentinck was chiefly associated. The Prince was, of course, the dominating figure, not merely by rank but by force of character and genius. A profound belief in his own destiny, and an unswerving determination to achieve the ends he had in view, enabled him to overcome the physical weakness that had been accentuated by the smallpox. In appearance William was slightly built, and below middle height; his rather exaggerated features led the ill-disposed among the London mob to nickname him "hook nose," from the long Roman nose which is so obvious in all portraits of him. As was the fashion

of the day, he was smooth shaven, his finely shaped head and thick natural black hair concealed by the immense curled wig of the period ; his hands and feet were small and delicate almost like those of a child. His only beauty, which impressed all who have tried to describe him, was that of his large and brilliant eyes. His expression, grave and composed, was not unkindly ; he had moments of geniality, and liked to be amused, but more commonly the cold taciturnity that he had assumed to hide his feelings became habitual to him. To those who approached him with some request, if they were not referred to Mr. Bentinck, he replied cautiously, "I'll see," and though he could reward generously, he acquired a reputation for parsimony, and the " I'll see " came to be known as a euphuism for refusal.[1] In spite of his intensive education he had little taste for literature or music or languages. His native tongue he wrote with a crisp lucidity, but he never acquired either elegance or conciseness in French, which was the habitual vehicle for his pen, and English, his mother's native tongue, he always spoke imperfectly.

The friend and master of William Bentinck was no easy man to serve. As to the sterling qualities and sound abilities of Bentinck himself, there is abundant testimony in spite of the fact that jealousy of his supreme influence, and the great wealth he acquired, led many of his contemporaries to disparage both. It was admitted that among the courtiers at the Hague M. Bentinck was first in importance—" faisoit la première figure." He was a well-made man, rather stiff in his carriage, his reddish blond hair covered by a perruque, his features though not irregular were strongly marked, and would have been unpleasing but for the charm of his manner and expression, which impressed men at first sight as gentle, kind and honest. He had none of the graces of the well-bred men of his day, no " esprit " ; the glancing wit that characterises their intercourse is absent from his letters. Rather he prided himself, being naturally downright and frank, on an acquired reticence, and the capacity for concealing his opinions, or the extent of his knowledge on

[1] " Ik sall zien." " Dat war syn woort van weygering."—Droste. Burnet: " He was too lavish of money on some occasions both in his buildings and to his favourites, but too sparing in rewarding services, or in encouraging those who brought him intelligence."

any point; an accomplishment which sometimes led men to underrate his intelligence and to call him dull and wooden. His contemporary, "M. de B——," a sort of "diable Boiteux" of the Court, who asserts that he knew Bentinck through and through, was of opinion that he was rather the Prince's pupil than his counsellor, and that all his capacity for business was derived from this tutelage. An assertion which their correspondence shows to be incorrect, for the Prince relied greatly on Bentinck's judgment of affairs. His interests, however, were certainly narrow, his close attendance on the Prince had, at all events at this point in his career, prevented his acquiring as wide an experience of men and manners as that to which he afterwards attained. He had, in common with the Prince, a knowledge and love of pictures, but a greater proficiency in the French language than his master. His attendance on the Prince and devotion to his interests were considered by those at Court as little better than a form of slavery, for William was an exacting friend, and the only hours that Bentinck could call his own were those during which the Prince was giving audiences. Like the Prince, Bentinck was considered a great economist.[1] Added to this, as was quite consistent with a man of narrow education and interests, William Bentinck had exceedingly strong prejudices, easily conceived and very difficult to overcome.

There were many English at the Court. Besides the Princess's ladies, there were the Court Chaplain, the presence of an English regiment in Holland necessitated an English Commander, there were also the English Ambassador and a drifting number of Englishmen who found it expedient during the troubled, unsettled state of affairs at home to visit Holland for a time, sometimes men of good family, and sometimes mere adventurers who hoped to become hangers-on of the Prince or to fish in troubled waters. Fortunately one Englishman who resided there from 1679 to 1681 kept a diary and preserved some part of his more intimate correspondence. The sidelights on Bentinck's private life are few and scanty, but something can be gleaned from the pages of Henry Sidney, who was to some extent in his confidence, who frequently entertained and was entertained by him, and was one of the very few Englishmen trusted by, and loyal

[1] "Le Prince étoit . . . bon économe, donna pue et avec peine aussi bien que son favory."

to, his master. He had all the graces of a courtier and a diplomatist, and much natural charm and sweetness of temper, but his native indolence kept him from his attaining to the political influence which the Prince's favour would have put within his grasp.[1]

Gay and charming, "of a sweet caressing temper," Sidney represents the lighter side of life; he is entrusted with commissions by his friends in England to procure Dutch coach horses and servants, his tact smooths over diplomatic distrust, he finds consolation in exile from the Court of St. James with Mary's maids of honour, he retails Court gossip, he pays court to an heiress seen at church—unsuccessfully however—and he sups and dances at "Madame Bentem's," as for some unexplained reason he always spells Bentinck.[2]

Sidney arrived in June 1679 as Envoy at the Hague, and found his surroundings there very depressing after the gaieties of St. James, especially as the Court was at that time absent. He brought the Prince of Orange a message from Charles II.: "All he had to say was to assure the Prince of Orange of his kindness, that he loved him, and would be as kind to him as if he were his own son." Soon after his arrival he was carried off by my Lord Ambassador Jenkins[3] to Dieren to see the Prince, where he found him in an ill house, but in a fine country. It was important to William to know at first hand how things were in England, where a crisis seemed to be rapidly approaching. So great was the alarm and distrust created in England by the "Popish Plot" and the depositions made by the informer Titus Oates,[4] that Parliament brought in a bill to exclude the

[1] See Burnet's *History of His Own Time.*

Robert Earl of Leicester = Dorothy daughter of Henry Earl of Northumberland

Henry Sidney (4th son)

Dorothy Dowager Countess of Sunderland = Lord Spencer (killed at Newbury)

Anne daughter of the Earl of Bristol. = Robert Earl of Sunderland

Dorothy = Lord Halifax

See Blencowe's *Sidney* for his diplomatic correspondence.

[3] Sir Leoline Jenkins. For Dieren, see Huygen's *Brievenwisseling*, p. 403.

[4] 1678. The Exclusion Bill was brought in the next year, May 1679.

Duke of York from the throne as a Roman Catholic. Many of the Prince's friends in England thought it would be advisable for him to take this opportunity of coming over. As ultimate heir apparent, it was inevitable that he would be involved in the ensuing party struggles. Charles II. protected his brother by repeated prorogations and dissolutions of Parliament, but there was no hand strong enough, no head cool enough, to allay the passions that had been aroused. With characteristic sagacity William refused to become personally involved in them either now or later on, when the demands for his presence became increasingly urgent; nor would he even send a representative to uphold his interests, though he considered and discussed the advisability of sending William Bentinck.[1] "If the stake he had in this world were ten times greater," the Prince told Sidney, "he would rather it should all go, than that he would save it by doing an ill thing, for he thought excluding the Duke an injustice."[2] This was his final decision. The States sent a memorial in favour of the Exclusion Bill.

Sidney does not mention having met William Bentinck on the occasion of his first visit to the Prince at Dieren, and only paid his first visit to the Bentincks on August 2. "In the evening I went to Zierfliet [Sorgvliet], M. Bentem's house." There are many such notes in the diary, but the details that would have been so valuable are withheld. Sidney's relations both with the Prince and Bentinck rapidly became friendly and unceremonious.

In the autumn[3] two important but embarrassing visitors came to the Hague, the Roman Catholic heir to the English throne, and the Protestant pretender to it. Absence from England had become expedient for both of them. The Duke of Monmouth had inherited Charles II.'s instability of character and personal charm without any of his father's brains,[4] and the restless ambition that made him the centre

[1] Blencowe's *Sidney*, 1679, vol. i. p. 13.

[2] *Ibid.* 1680, vol. ii. p. 120. September. See also p. 143. The Prince's decision was justified by the event. The Exclusion Bill was rejected by the Lords through the influence of Halifax in 1680. The following March, 1681, Charles dissolved his fifth Parliament to prevent the second reading of the bill. A subsidy from Louis XIV. enabled him to dispense with Parliament for the rest of his reign. See also the letters of the Duke of York to William. Dalrymple, vol. i. appendix, 297.

[3] Macpherson's Original Papers, i. 94, September 1679.

[4] He was the son of Lucy Waters whom Evelyn describes as a "browne beautiful bold insipid creature." Charles married him to Anne Scott, Duchess of Buccleugh in her own right.

of mischievous intrigues had at the moment worn out even the King's easy-going temper. At the same time the violent feeling against Roman Catholicism and the Duke of York's open adherence to it were so alarming thoughtful men, that for his own sake and the cause of peace Charles sent his brother away also. James was so unpopular that it seemed as if the King could only maintain his own position by sacrificing the Duke,[1] who was himself not unnaturally of opinion that such a course would be suicidal.

The Prince of Orange had to steer carefully between their conflicting claims. Monmouth's interests were obviously opposed to his own ; it was no part of his scheme to support a Protestant pretender to the throne, in which he stood in the direct line of succession ; on the other hand, it would have been impolitic not to receive hospitably a man who would almost certainly be restored to favour before long, though for the moment Charles II. refused to see him. Both brothers were, however, becoming suspicious of William's intentions and his relations with Monmouth,[2] and all letters to Holland were opened. When Monmouth came to the Hague he was " mightily well received." [3] He talked freely to Sidney of his own melancholy prospects, and the Envoy a few days later faithfully reported all he knew of the Duke to the Prince, after which they repaired for supper to the Bentincks' (October 1), where they were joined by the Princess. Monmouth became very popular at the Hague, now and on his later visits. He was " handsome, well-made and valiant, and had given many proofs of it. He was beloved by the fair sex, so that nothing was lacking to him except judgement "—so Droste.

After the Duke of York had left Holland for Edinburgh, as well as later on in the next year, William found it necessary to write at intervals assuring his father-in-law of his good faith, to which James replied—rather half-heartedly—that he has given no credence to accusations against the Prince of disloyalty to himself.[4]

When the Duke of York started on his journey for Scotland, the Princess Mary and the Prince, accompanied by Sidney, saw him as far as his place of embarkation at

[1] In the matter of the Exclusion Bill.
[2] See Godolphin to William, December 1679. Groen van Prinsterer, s. ii. vol. v. p. 373.
[3] September 27, 1679. Blencowe's *Sidney*, vol. i. p. 154.
[4] The Duke of York to William, December 1680. Groen van Prinsterer.

Maysland Sluys. On their return home they all dined at the Bentincks'. One can imagine there was a considerable feeling of relief at the dinner. The Prince told the Envoy as he was leaving that the Duke thought him too much the Duke of Monmouth's friend.

Monmouth himself returned to England before the end of the year. It was Sidney who brought this news, which provoked the half-contemptuous jest from the Prince that "it was not fair play considering they were plotting together," [1] and he considered the advisability of sending Mr. Bentinck into England to readjust his relations with his uncles and his supporters there; as Sidney learned while visiting Monsieur "Bentem" at Sorgvliet in December. But amid all the outward show of entertainment, and the coming and going of visitors to the Hague, domestic relations at the little Court were not happy. The Prince's lack of attention to his wife was notorious, and had often been the subject of adverse comment, but now her failing health began to be laid at his door, and attributed by general gossip to his neglect of her. At her first coming into Holland the Princess Mary had ordered her life in accordance with her own inclinations and tastes independently of her husband, of whom in the early years of their married life she can have seen very little. Young as she was, the force of her understanding and the dignity and beauty of her character soon asserted themselves. Her influence over the ladies of her Court, with whom she worked and read, was very great.

In the diaries and letters of the period, whose writers with a light-hearted cynicism level the most damning accusations and insinuations against all and sundry, no breath even of criticism was ever directed against Mary Stuart. Those whom her dignity and high standard of duty could not impress—and there are very few people who are not unconsciously impressed by these qualities—were won by her personal beauty and the charm of her manners. But the Prince at this time had not learned to value the wife to whom in later years he became deeply devoted. Dominating and autocratic, he resented the fact that he owed his claim to the English throne, and his right to rule there, to his wife; her relatives were a perpetual source of irritation to him, breaking their engagements, suspecting him of double dealing, criticising his actions, and, worst of all, coming to stay with him.

[1] Blencowe, i. 195, November 25, 1679.

Mary herself was deeply sensible of her father's attitude to her husband and the difficulty of her own position, but she never wavered in her allegiance to William. But her piety seems to have annoyed him—the private chapel in her dining-room with steps up to the altar, her "high church" chaplains, as the Victorian era would have called them, Dr. Hooper of whom his dislike was a joke at Court, and even the saintly Dr. Ken, who was so injudicious as to announce his intention of remonstrating with the Prince. There was besides another cause of estrangement between them, the obscure history of which might have been suffered to remain in oblivion but for the awkward predicament in which it involved the Bentincks. At the Court of Charles II. one intrigue more or less would have been passed over with indifference or jocularity, but at the austere Court at the Hague it assumed glaring prominence. The Prince had turned for amusement and intellectual companionship to one of the Princess's ladies, Madame Bentinck's elder sister, Elizabeth Villiers. "Betty" Villiers, or "The Squinter" as she was nicknamed in Holland, was ugly, unscrupulous and clever. One of the wittiest women of her generation and a past mistress in the art of intrigue, she made up in brains what was lacking to her in charm. Besides a squint,[1] she had a muddy complexion and a crooked figure; her only beauty was a white and well-shaped neck. It is difficult to imagine a woman less calculated to inspire love. In the case of the Prince it is doubtful whether she did so. He found her society amusing, and sought it with the greatest secrecy, but their relations were so little a secret that they formed the topic of conversation at a dinner party in Paris to which Droste was invited by some Dutch friends in October of this year. Betty Villiers had another lover, a Scottish officer in the service of the States, one Wauchope,[2] who had the temerity to visit her when William was absent on hunting expeditions, though he knew the Prince was having his movements watched. The latest Court gossip was eagerly asked for by Droste's Dutch friends. Was the Prince able to conceal his jealousy? they asked; and was this likely to please the Princess, apart from the Prince's long hunting expeditions in which she was

[1] Swift describes her as "squinting like a dragon."

[2] Wauchope afterwards served against William under James II. in Ireland. After the capitulation of Limerick he went to see Ginkel, who described him, now a beaten and a banished man, as shedding tears in speaking of his former service in Holland.

not able to share, and from which he returned very tired to her company? If all these matters were so well known, it is incredible that they can have escaped the notice of Mary herself, though she was much too proud to appear to be aware of them. In the spring of 1680, however, she became seriously ill, even alarmingly so. The cause of her illness does not appear, but it was very generally attributed at Court to the Prince's unkindness. Sidney, who had "taken physic" and was staying at home, had many callers anxious to discuss the subject, among them Dr. Ken,[1] at that time the Princess's Chaplain at the Hague, and Sir Gabriel Sylvius.[2]

The news that so important a life was in danger quickly spread to England. Temple wrote anxiously to Sidney for information and the Duke of York himself wrote to William, much disquieted by a letter he had received from the Prince dated March 29 (N.S.) which "has put me in very great paine for my daughter to see that she was so ill when you wrote, and shall be very impatient till the new letter come, and pray at any tyme, when she is not in a condition to write herself, lett me heare from you how she dos." This the Prince did with great fidelity, till by April 6 (O.S.) her father was able to write: "I have now received two of yours of the 9–12 since I wrot to you, by the last of which I was very glad to find my daughter had been abroad to take the aire, which I hope will sone restore her to her perfect health."

About this time occurs the significant entry in Sidney's diary: "I walked a great while in M. Bentem's garden"—discussing with its owner the gathering clouds on the political horizon in England, whither Sidney went shortly afterwards. Here Monmouth added to the general disquietude by attempting seditious progresses, at which Charles II., not to mention James, was very much displeased.

In Holland meanwhile were being celebrated the wedding festivities of Baron Henry Bentinck, William Bentinck's eldest brother, an important family event. His marriage took place in October with Magdalena, Erbfrau of Lutterberg, daughter of a Major of Cavalry, Baron of Ittersum, Lord of

[1] Afterwards Bishop of Bath and Wells, and one of the Seven Bishops.

[2] Had been in England on the service of the States. Made Hofmeester to the Prince at the time of his marriage and returned with him. See *Evelyn's Diary*, November 11, 1677.

Lutterberg. A less ceremonious occasion was the ball at the Bentincks' given to the Prince to celebrate his birthday on November 4.

"We danced at Monsieur Bentem's"[1]—the phrase suggests a pleasant informal party at which everybody, including the Prince himself, could enjoy themselves absolved from the tedium of etiquette. Early in the next year Bentinck fell seriously ill, as appears from a letter from William dated Soestdyck, March 3. The Prince had received news of Bentinck's illness, and of the birth of a son to him, and writes a short letter of sympathy and congratulation, with the very unreasonable request, considering his family circumstances, that Bentinck should come immediately to Dieren from the Hague. The Prince begs him, if it is possible, to have himself moved to Utrecht and from thence to Dieren :

"as it is impossible for me to be absent from you knowing that you are ill, which I have learned with extreme grief"—"m'estant impossible d'estre absent de vous, vous sachant malade, ce que j'ai appri avec une douleur extrême" —"which has damped the joy I had in hearing that Madame vostre femme has had a boy, whom I hope will live long enough to become as honest a man as you are and if I have children I hope they will love each other as much as we do."

Good wishes that were not destined to be fulfilled, for the Bentincks' firstborn son Willem died young.

No sooner had Bentinck recovered than the Princess fell ill of a course of humours in her eyes,[2] and the gaiety of the Court was still further eclipsed by the news that one of its most popular members was about to return to England, for in May Sidney was recalled. The Prince would have liked to appoint him to the command of the English forces in Holland, which had become vacant by the death of young Lord Ossory the autumn before.[3] Ossory's death caused universal regret both at home and in England—"he is as much

[1] Blencowe's *Sidney*, November 1680.

[2] "I was sorry to find by yours of the 14, which I received this morning, that my daughter had sore eis."—James to William, Edinburgh, April 1681.

[3] Sidney asked for the command. August 1680.

lamented heere as any man can be," wrote Charles II. to William, and even James expressed himself as sensibly touched. But with Sidney it was a very different matter. Both the King and the Duke of York had conceived a great distrust of him. Was he not the friend of the treacherous Sunderland, who had voted for the Exclusion Bill? The Duke was much concerned in the matter, even agitated, and wrote at very great length to remonstrate with his son-in-law:

"I should be very sorry to see Mr. Sidney at the head of such a body of men of his Majesty's subjects that is so influenced by some of the greatest enemys I have in the world.[1] I could say much more upon this subject to lett you see how very unfitt a thing it would be to lett him have such a command."

Sidney afterwards quitted his pretensions for the command, as James phrased it, but to the announcement that Mr. Skelton was to take his place as Envoy at the Hague, William strongly opposed himself, protesting that he should be consulted before such an appointment was made. Sidney meanwhile returned to England, having considerable difficulty in getting his arrears of pay. He was eventually obliged to leave his plate and personal effects behind him as a pledge of good faith.

The question of his successor was eventually settled by the substitution for Skelton of Mr. Hales, one of the Lord Commissioners of the Admiralty.[2] In July the Prince paid a brief visit to England.[3] His purpose in coming to England was not solely to propitiate the King in response to the advice of Sidney, but also to endeavour to get some definite satisfaction with regard to the foreign policy of England in the midst of

[1] Sunderland wrote to Sidney, "I hear from London that you are recalled, and that Mr. Skelton is to go in your place, that the Prince of Orange has given you Lord Ossory's command, and that you are presently to be married."—Blencowe, June 3, 1681.

[2] Lord Conway to William, October 7, 1681.—Groen van Prinsterer, vol. v. s. ii. p. 525.

[3] See the comments on this by the Duke of York, Clarke's *Life of James II.*, i. 690. Burnet describes Skelton as "the haughtiest but withall the weakest man that could have been found. He talked out all secrets and made himself the scorn of all Holland." He went to the Hague in 1682 with a recommendation from Halifax to the Prince. For William's remonstrance at his being sent, see Groen van Prinsterer, vol. v. s. ii., May 31, June 10, 21

what Temple calls "the perpetuall fluctuation in our Counsells." The aggressions of Louis XIV. continued to be a continual menace to Europe, and a cause of unrest and uneasiness to other Governments. Even Charles II., supine and indolent as he was, became occasionally stirred to resentment, and in one of those flashes of insight that were characteristic of him, exclaimed to Temple: "The haughtyness and insincereness of the French are not to be boren, and will at one time or another bring an old house about their heads" [1]—as in fact they eventually did a hundred years later. Charles was, however, in the pay of France from 1681 till the end of his reign.[2]

During this visit to England, which was only of a short duration, the Prince had much private discourse with the King at Windsor. On this occasion the shrewd but unscrupulous Charles assured him that "whenever the Duke of York should come to reign, he would be so restless and violent that he could not hold it four years to an end." [3] Charles added that he intended to keep things quiet and not give way to the Duke's eagerness in religious matters.

Bentinck afterwards told Dr. Burnet the curious fact that during one of these private conversations the King showed William one of his seals, telling him that whatever he might write to him on his return to Holland, if the letter were not sealed with that particular seal, he was to look on it as only drawn from him by importunity. The Prince put a literal interpretation on these words of the King's, and whatever the purport of the subsequent letters that he received from his uncle relating to Monmouth's presence in Holland, he concluded that Charles II. wished him to keep his favourite son by him and use him well, for none of these letters was sealed with the special seal. The story bears the imprint of truth though recorded only at third hand, so characteristic is it of a weak man, who, while he loved the Royal prerogative, loved his ease before all things.[4]

The question in which Holland was most immediately

[1] Temple to William, Groen van Prinsterer, 378, January 1680.

[2] In 1681 Louis XIV. agreed to pay Charles five million livres in the next three years.

[3] Burnet's *History of His Own Time*.

[4] James comments on this visit of the Prince to England: "His business could be no other than to work the King to an agreement with his Parliament which would . . . quite blast the Duke's expectation of ever seeing the end of his miseries."—Clarke's *Life of James II.*, i. 690.

concerned was that of the Spanish Netherlands. After the Peace of Nimeguen Louis XIV. had established "Chambers of Reunion," as they were called, which were judicial bodies for settling questions of international law. By their decision he claimed sovereignty over Alsace; and French troops occupied Strasburg (September 1681). The occupation by France of Luxemburg would have given her control of the Netherlands. In November the French began the siege of Luxemburg. This action roused so much alarm and opposition, not in Holland merely, where the Prince was authorised to march to the relief of the city, but in England also, that Louis XIV., fearing that Charles II. might be compelled to summon a parliament, raised the siege early in 1682. These continued aggressions of France so far alarmed Europe, that William's attempts at forming a Coalition for the maintenance of the Treaty of Nimeguen bore fruit in an Association formed at the Hague in February 1683, which was joined by Sweden, the Emperor, and Spain. England held aloof. At the end of the year fresh encroachments on the part of Louis provoked a declaration of war from Spain. France replied by at once besieging Luxemburg.

Another European war appeared to be inevitable, but England was now a negligible quantity, Spain and the German Princes were supine, the Emperor was occupied with the Turks.[1] Moreover there now appeared a cleavage in public opinion in Holland itself. Amsterdam and the States of Groningen and Friesland[2] refused their consent to the levy of further troops. There was at this time a French party in Amsterdam fostered assiduously by the French Ambassador d'Avaux and supported at the moment by van Beuningen.[3] A violent quarrel ensued between Amsterdam and the Prince, who had d'Avaux's courier arrested and published the correspondence between the French Ambassador and that city, exposing the bribery and treachery resorted to in order to support the opposition to the new levies. Feeling on both sides was so bitter that it appeared irreconcilable, though eventually a compromise was effected. It was now that Louis XIV. finally took possession of William's Principality of Orange. William hoped that Charles II. would

[1] In 1683 the Turks were besieging Vienna.

[2] Governed by a separate Stadtholder, Henry Casimer.

[3] Burnet says, "The town of Amsterdam was for many years conducted by him as by a dictator." On his inconsistency, see also Sidney and Temple.

use his influence with the French King to get it restored to him.[1] This outline of political affairs is essential to the understanding of the correspondence between Bentinck and the Prince in 1683 relating to his visit to England.

The year 1682 is singularly barren in news of the private, as opposed to the political, life of William Bentinck, but in the summer of 1683 Bentinck once again comes into prominence through a visit to England. The ostensible motive for this visit was to congratulate the King and the Duke of York on their escape from assassination in the Rye House Plot, but the Prince's correspondence relating to his visit shows that he was still attempting to enlist Charles's co-operation in foreign affairs. Earlier in the year he had written to his uncle clearly expressing his views on the imperative necessity of being prepared, and of forming an alliance to oppose the predominating power of France and the danger of inconclusive peace.[2] The situation could not have been expressed in more concise and cogent phrases, but Charles, with his hands in the French King's pockets, was not in a position to listen to them.

The Rye House Plot followed a visit of Charles and James to Newmarket races. James wrote thence to his nephew on March 19 [3]:

"This day after I came from hunting I receved yours of the 19th. . . . Hitherto we have had but few horse-races, but this day we had two, and they tell me there will be every day this weeke one, except Thursday. This place is now pretty full, and besids the races and hunting, we have cock-fighting, so that one as always some thing or other to do, tho' little newse to write."

The seething discontent in the country had found expression among some of the leading men in meetings and revolutionary talk—in which Shaftesbury, Lord Russell, the Earl of Essex and Algernon Sidney were involved. They afterwards withdrew, but the extremists formed a scheme for murdering the King and the Duke of York as they returned from

[1] See the correspondence of William and Charles II., 1682, published by Dalrymple, i. appendix, 101 *seq.*

[2] March 1683.

[3] The frequent discrepancy in dates must be referred to the New and Old Styles.

Newmarket at the Rye House, a property belonging to one of the ringleaders, called Rumbold, on a heath near London. Before their schemes were completed the outbreak of a destructive fire at Newmarket caused Charles and James to return prematurely. One of the plotters turned King's evidence, and as at this time plots and rumours of plots were in the air, false witnesses were cheap and abundant, and juries easily suborned, it was not difficult to confound the innocent with the guilty.[1] Essex died in prison, Russell and Algernon Sidney were executed, Shaftesbury had already made good his escape to France. Monmouth, who had incurred suspicion of being implicated in the original plot, was pardoned by his father, through the intervention of Lord Halifax, but shortly afterwards withdrew to Holland, where he was received by William with distinguished consideration. Obviously at such a time a dutiful nephew could do no less than send over his most trusted friend and servant to congratulate his two uncles on their escape from an untimely death, which would have placed himself upon the throne. The return of the King and Duke of York to Windsor took place towards the end of June. Bentinck must have gone over about a month later.[2] In the very interesting series of letters the Prince writes to him during this visit, important political news is mingled with the most intimate gossip. The first letter of the series is valedictory and is dated from Breda, July 19, 1683:

"I send you the hair of which I have spoken. Tell Loofs to send me the ring to Dieren. It seems already a month since I saw you—may the good God grant you a

[1] Burnet says of juries at this time that they were the shame of the nation, as well as a reproach to religion, for they were packed, and prepared verdicts as they were directed.—Burnet, *History of His Own Times.*

[2] Clarke's *Life*, i. 744.

James comments on the retreat of Monmouth to the Hague after the Rye House Plot: "where he saw the Prince of Orange and whether he satisfied him or no (as he pretended he could with a quarter of an hour's discours) it argued no great respect in that Prince to the King and Duke to admit a visit from a person who had own'd himself capable of entring into so horrid a conspiracy against them both . . . the Duke in some measure expostulating with his son-in-law forewarned him not to credit a person who . . . had so lately done his best to destroy them all, and involve the Kingdom in blood and confusion. But that Prince's dark designs were not under the tyes of honour and duty, and he then began to give the Duke of Monmouth such encouragement as hindered his hope from extinguishing with his friends, who now were every day found guilty and executed."

good journey and a quick return. Do not tell the Princess that I have written to you nor about the ring."

Conjecture is vain here. Whose hair was Bentinck commissioned to have set in the ring? Was it the Prince's own? A lock of that thick dark hair on which the Cambridge chronicler commented; and was the ring intended as a surprise for the Princess? One likes to think so.

The second letter is dated three days later from Grave, July 22. After expressing hopes for his Ambassador's safe arrival, the Prince goes on to say that he has never had such an annoying journey in his life as the one he made after Bentinck had left Breda:

"I left it at 7 a.m. and only arrived at Maestricht the day after at 4 in the morning, having travelled all night, and on arriving, for my consolation, I learnt the unfortunate news from Vienna and the reason that you know, and all this at once, you can judge how annoyed I am about it. I shall go shortly to the Hague about this unfortunate affair of 'Hongerie.'

"Farewell Always wholly yours: ('je suis toujours absolument à vous')."

The affair of Hungary to which the Prince alludes here must have been the news that the Turks were besieging Vienna; them enace was so serious that the Emperor and his family had already left the capital and taken refuge in Passau. The Turkish invasion, crippling as it did the resources of the Empire, and preventing the Emperor from taking an active and vigorous part in the Western campaign against French aggression, was a most serious setback to William's scheme of a European Coalition. The blockade was begun on July 17 and continued for two months.

The Prince carried out his intention of going to the Hague, leaving the Princess and all his equipage at Dieren. He wrote to Bentinck to tell him so on July 27, acknowledging two letters received from Harwich and London with news of his safe arrival. His letter is chiefly concerned with Hungarian affairs, which were not as bad as had at first been represented.[1]

[1] A delay in the advance of the Turkish force under Kara Mustafa had enabled the Emperor's brother-in-law, Charles of Lorraine, who was in command of the Imperial Army, to make some belated preparations for the defence of the city and leave there a garrison of 13,000 regular troops, while he withdrew with his main army to await reinforcements.

With an abrupt transition to matters of a more personal interest, the Prince continues :

" I must give you some account of how I found things at Dieren, everything has grown exceedingly well, everything in the garden as well as in the Plantation, but little fruit . . . the melons spoilt by the rain which has been heavier here than in Holland."

The measure of success attained by Bentinck on this visit can best be estimated by the letters of Charles II. and the Duke of York to the Prince. The escape to Holland of the refugees concerned in the Assassination Plot put the Prince in the embarrassing position of appearing to harbour them. He sought to strengthen his envoy's hands by writing personally to James on this subject to assure his father-in-law of his good faith. James's reply, suggesting a measure of scepticism with regard to it, was confided to Bentinck, after he had discussed the political situation with him.

The Duke writes from London on July 26, 1683 :

" Two days since I received yours of the 2nd of August by which I see you had done your part towards the taking of such as were fled from hence by reason of the late conspiracy and am fully satisfyd with what you did in it, and shall still do my part that there may be a very good understanding between his Ma^ty and yourself, but you must do your part to, as this bearer Mr. Bentinck can tell you, to whom I must refer all I have to say upon that subject and pray consider the present condition of Germany and what he will say to you from his Majesty. Marriage was consummated last night between my daughter Anne and Prince George. . . . I need say no more now this bearer being informed of all things, but to assure you that I will still do my part as truly as you can desire, to lett you see I am as kind as ever to you." [1]

Among other leading men with whom Bentinck was commissioned to converse on current affairs was Laurence

[1] Groen van Prinsterer, vol. v. s. ii. p. 580. This marriage was regarded as a triumph for French diplomacy.

Hyde, Earl of Rochester. Rochester replies in a kind of flurry of anxiety to propitiate the Prince without in any way committing himself. His letter is dated July 29, St. James's Street [1]:

"I give your Highenesse most humble thanks for the honour you were pleased to do me, in letting me receive your commands by Mr. Bentincke, which I am alwais very desirous to obey with all possible duty and devotion. I hope Mr. Bentincke himselfe will doe me that good office to your Highnesse as to represent to you how much I desire to be in your Highnesse good opinion, and I will referr myself to him, whether he doth not thinke I will endeavour to deserve it. I am sorry there should be such difference in opinion in relation to the publicke affaires, as to hinder him from returning to your Highnesse with an entire satisfaction, but I hope, in all other matters, which perhaps needed a better understanding, he will have had such successe that your Highnesse will not have cause to repent you sent him hither for a short time, tho you have a great deal for him to doe at home. By the acquaintance I have had the honour to have with him a long time and by the intimacy and credit he hath with your Highnesse I have been induced to speake of many things with great freedome to him, both passed and present, in order, to the best of my understanding, to the service of his Ma^{ty}, the Duke, and your Highnesse, which is an interest so joyned by God that one may venture to say cursed be he that putts it asunder. If Mr. Bentinck shall think fitt to trouble your Highnesse with anything on this subject, you will be judge yourselfe whether it did not come from a heart full of duty and zealous for your service, which I have the greatest passion imaginable to promote, if your Highnesse judges so inconsiderable a man as I am fitt to be employed in it."

The Prince was much too shrewd a judge of men to be impressed unduly by any such protestation from a time-server like the Earl of Rochester, though it was part of his

[1] Groen van Prinsterer, *Maison d'Orange Nassau*, ii. v. p. 580. 1683.

cynical humour to affect to accept such assurances from politicians whose interests were uncertainly divided. Indeed a statesman could have ill-afforded at such a time of wavering balances to quench smoking flax. He therefore replied with great cordiality :

"It is with great pleasure that I must not merely thank you for all the kindness and civilities that you have shown to M. de Bentinck, but above all for the frankness with which you have spoken. I believe that you are well enough acquainted with my temper to know it is a thing I value above all others. I am equally obliged to you for the assurance you have given to M. de Bentinck, as well as in the letter that you have taken the trouble to write to me, that you will endeavour to maintain a good disposition towards me on the part of the King and M. le Duq." [1]

The Prince expresses profound regret that the King and the Duke differ so much from him on public questions, and hopes that in the future more confidence may be put in himself on the subject of foreign affairs, "since assuredly being more on the spot we are better informed of them." He concludes with an expression of confidence in Rochester's probity which was not fulfilled.

The more apparently sincere letter of Charles II. caused his nephew considerable disquietude, as the only definite assurance it contains relates to the long-standing grievance of the Prince's Estate of Orange, which Louis XIV. had been gradually absorbing, dismantling the fortifications, and persecuting the Protestant inhabitants. Charles writes :

"Whithall, July 30, 1683.[2]

"To my dearest Nephew the Prince of Orange.

"I had sooner acknowledged the concerne you tooke in your letter about the Charter of London, but that Mr. Bentinck came just as I was writing, which made me defer saying anything till I knew what he came about, and now I must thank you very kindly for the part you take both

[1] Clarendon Correspondence, vol. i. p. 89. Translated from French. August 16, 1683.

[2] Groen van Prinsterer, ii. v. 581.

in the matter of the Charter [1] [of the City of London] and the deliverance I had from the hands of those bloody villans, who designed my destruction. I acknowledge it to God's great mercy and I hope he has preserved me for better thinges. Mr. Bentinck and I have discoursed at large upon the matter of the generall peace, and am sorry to finde that you are so steddy in your opinion that the generall peace cannot be made upon the conditions that France now offers, I cannot imagine as matters stand now in Christendom that the agreement can be made upon easier terms, and I feare by delay the Emperour's condition will not grow better, so as I cannot change my opinion that these propositions offered ought to be refused, I have tould my minde more at large to this bearer, Mr. Bentinck, so that I will add no more upon this subject, but that in the end I feare you will finde that I am in the right. You may be assured that, whatever happens, I will ever be as kind to you as if you were my owne son, and I will not faile to do all that lyes in my power for your satisfaction about the businesse of Orange, tho I must tell you that I apprehend it depends very much upon general agreement."

In this letter Charles confined himself to vague generalities. It was of small moment to him whether Strasburg was held by Louis XIV. or the Emperor, whether the Spanish Netherlands retained their barrier towns, or whether the frontiers lay open to French troops as long as French gold enabled him to be master in his own house, and dispense with a factious Parliament. William was, after all, to be left single-handed to block the way to Louis's fulfilment of his designs, which had advanced considerably during the previous year.

In his reply the Prince is much more explicit :

"Sir,—I entreat your Majesty to believe that I understand very well the danger in which Christianity is, and

[1] The allusion to the Charter of London refers to its confiscation by Charles. As soon as he found himself independent of Parliament the King began to pursue a high-handed policy of revenge on those who had attacked the Royal prerogative. The Charter of the City of London was cancelled. The same measures were afterwards applied to other towns. They were obliged to relinquish their Charters on some charge of irregularity and to accept others granted on less liberal terms.

that I do not flatter myself with illusory hopes, but I also entreat your Majesty to consider that if the Spanish Netherlands are reduced to being a country only in name and not in fact, which will assuredly be the case if Luxemburg is dismembered from them, what assurance or security we should have on such a barrier, if it would not be better not to have one, than one which could not be capable of the least resistance." [1]

On July 30 the Prince wrote a hurried letter at the moment of starting on a hunting expedition, giving Bentinck a commission to buy a saddle horse for the Princess and a hunter for himself. It is dated from Zulesteyn : " I am on the point of getting into the carriage to go to a rendez-vous with Ginkel, and hunt a stag . . . if you can buy me a good horse for the Chase please do so and a pad for the Princess." Three days later the Prince had received a report from his Ambassador, couched evidently in very hopeful terms, as was characteristic of the writer. William replies with a cautious reserve concerning public affairs, as though fearing that what he wrote might fall into other hands than Bentinck's :

" Dieren, August 2.—Only yesterday I received your letter of the 27th, from which I am very glad to learn that you have not found the King greatly embittered against me, and that you hope you have satisfied him with regard to my conduct and my feelings, as well as M. le Duc "—(on this head Bentinck must have been a little optimistic).—" However I have written to M. le Duc to express to him my joy at what you have told me, that he is still satisfied with me, and that in future he will have an entire confidence in me. I also confirm in general the assurances made on my behalf, of which you have spoken, to my Lord Rochester. I like better to put it in general terms than to specify it. You can give him the letter if you think it advisable."

The Prince also alludes to another letter with which Bentinck had been entrusted, which was to be given to the

[1] Groen van Prinsterer, undated, but written after Bentinck's return, as Charles II. in his letter to William speaks of " this bearer," Mr. Bentinck.

King at his own discretion, assuring Charles that plotters and traitors were not merely not harboured in Holland, but that search should be made for them, and they should be sent back to England. These letters had already been delivered and their replies written. The Prince was to be again embarrassed by the presence of Monmouth in Holland, It is said, his letter continues, that Monmouth had landed at Flushing, and had gone thence to Amsterdam and Rotterdam without stopping; his intentions were not known, nor the truth as to these rumours. This brings him to the main point of the letter:

"I am profoundly disturbed to hear that with regard to public affairs you have found his Majesty still persuaded of the good intentions of France. It is inconceivable that he should allow himself to receive this impression, and that he seems to think it reasonable that the Empire should sacrifice Strasburg for some equivalent of Friburg and some other place in Alsace."

The Prince then makes an abrupt transition to everyday affairs, turning with relief from vexed questions of State to the freer air of the hunting-field. There follows a detailed account of a stag-hunt and the course pursued over ground as familiar to the reader as the writer. "It was a very rough run," he concludes, "lasting five hours and a quarter without a single check, and having used all relays the horses never refused, nor was there a single fall."

This letter contains further some Court gossip of a less open-air nature reported by the Prince to his friend in a jocular tone with evident relish. "It is impossible to express how impatient I am to see you again," he concludes, and he writes later in an ascending scale of impatience: "I cannot think why you did not leave as soon as you had made my compliments to the Prince of Denmark."

Early in 1684 a Congress assembled at the Hague attended by the Ambassadors of those Powers who had joined the Association of 1683: the Emperor, Sweden, Bavaria, the House of Brunswick-Lüneberg among others. They decided to ask Charles II. to obtain from France an Eight Years' Truce on the condition of the restitution to Spain and the Empire of what France had taken since the Peace of

Nimeguen. Charles II. declined. Louis XIV. made a counter-proposal of a Twenty Years' Truce with the Empire and Spain on the basis of the retention during that time of what he had taken.[1] This proposal was supported both by Charles II. and Brandenburg. This accounts for the gloom of the following letter from Bentinck to Sidney :

"The Hague, February 22, 1684.

"I have just received your letter of the 29th of last month (O.S.). I confess, Monsieur, that our affairs are in a state that must distress you if you wish us well, as I am sure you do. It is true that when we suffer you will not be long at ease . . . but we have reason to wonder at the conduct of your Court and Ministry which ought to be more enlightened, but which regards its interests differently from all the rest of the world. They scheme greatly with M. van Beuningen [2] and all those of the Government of Amsterdam. M. Chudleigh [3] has been there two or three days, and returned yesterday evening. I ask you if this is not publicly supporting a party in the State against M. le Prince without even wishing to save appearances.

"Our affairs are in a desperate state if England turns her back upon us. But take care lest driven to despair we should say like Sampson when he pulled down the pillar which sustained the house, 'Let Sampson perish with the Philistines.'

"Our troops, however, are under orders to hold themselves in readiness to march into the Netherlands, and we try to hurry our levies as much as we can. We are leaving to-night for Zealand."

The letter concludes on a more cheerful note, that of a commission for Sidney's niece by marriage, Lady Sunderland, a lady who ever had an eye to the main chance :

[1] About an eighth part of the Empire. Klopp, ii. 427.
[2] Amsterdam was opposed to war.
[3] Charles II.'s Ambassador at the Hague, described by William to Bentinck as "a very foolish and impertinent man." Dalrymple, i. p. 124. For his insolence to the Prince of Orange, see d'Avaux, iv., who adds, however, "Le Prince d'Orange avoit fort maltraité Chudleigh, jusqu'à hui mettre devant le nez le but de sa canne."

"I have found a gardener for Madame de Sunderlant, but he asks very high wages because he must go out of the country, which this sort of person is afraid of doing. Pray tell me what wages one ordinarily gives to a gardener in England, and have made for me by someone who understands it a list of the flowers that I should send, which are not common in that country, for to send things which are ordinary is not worth while. . . . Be always assured, Monsieur, that I shall be all my life inalterably yours." [1]

Not Charles II. only, but William's other uncle,[2] Brandenburg, who had made an alliance with France after the Peace of Nimeguen, urged upon him the acceptance of the French terms. It roused the Prince to a passionate outburst: "I see that if God does not take upon himself the protection of this poor people and her neighbours," he exclaimed to the Elector's Ambassador, Fuchs, "in a short time all will be over." Acceptance of the conditions proposed by France would allow the complete occupation of Belgium to depend only on her pleasure.

"Just the same thing will happen that took place after the Peace of Nimeguen. France will take more in Peace than she did in war. . . . If ruin shall come upon us it is more honourable to lose what is ours with arms in our hands, than through submission to the farce of the 'Chambers of Reunion,' and in the end an honourable death is better than a cowardly life. . . . As for me I was born in misfortune and reared in misfortune, but by God's grace I am again restored to the Honours of my fathers. One thing only pains me deeply that the Elector, who has loved me from the cradle like a father, whom I honour as a son, has ranged himself on the side of the City of Amsterdam, which prides itself on always opposing me." [3]

The energy of the Prince carried all before him in this clinging to a forlorn hope. The majority of the Provinces

[1] Add. MSS. 32681.
[2] By his marriage with Louise Henrietta, daughter of Prince Frederick Henry of Orange.
[3] Klopp, ii. 431, quoted from Puffendorf, lib. xviii.

were with him. In March the States-General decided, in spite of the objection of Amsterdam, to send further help to Belgium.

Meanwhile Bentinck writes to Sidney in a no less despondent strain.

"The Hague, Ap. 7, 1684.

"Our affairs continue to follow their course, that is to say the road to our general destruction. Letters from France say that the proposals we made for a truce met with some approbation there, at least as far as they concerned the Netherlands. Notwithstanding you have rejected them as unreasonable. I always wonder how you can continue in a line of conduct which will assure your ruin as well as ours. I have not yet been able to find a reasonably good gardener for Madame the Countess of Sunderland. However I will do all that is possible to fulfil her commands. I beg you to let me have news of you as often as you can, Monsieur."

In June 1684 Luxemburg was taken, and the Emperor, still in the throes of the war against the Turks, felt himself obliged to agree to the Twenty Years' Truce with Louis XIV. at Ratisbon. It was subsequently accepted by Spain and Holland.

During this summer the Duke of York wrote to the Princess to remonstrate about the civility shown to the Duke of Monmouth by herself and the Prince. The letter is dated Windsor, June 10, 1684:

"I see it troubles you to know that exceptions are found as to the Prince's behaviour to the Duke of Monmouth . . . and the excuse you make for him is not a good one, for tho' 'tis true the Duke of Monmouth had his pardon, yett all the world knows what an ill return he made the King for it, which obliged his Majesty to banish him his presence."

Another letter followed to the same effect two days later addressed to the Prince.

Mary burst into tears after reading her father's letter, declaring that she was not mistress, and since the Prince

vished her to be civil to the Duke of Monmouth she must obey him.[1]

There are three letters extant for this year, but they are of no special interest. They were written by the Prince from Dieren to Bentinck at the Hague and are concerned with business matters interspersed with hunting news. They are dated July 22, 23, 25. His stay in the country seems to have been terminated by an urgent summons from M. le Pensionary, who was in bed with an attack of gout, urging the Prince's return, as in the absence of both himself and William a resolution might be passed by the States very prejudicial to his interests.

[1] D'Avaux, vol. iv. p. 40.

CHAPTER IV.—1685–1687

BENTINCK'S MISSION TO JAMES II

On February 6/16, 1685, Charles II. breathed his last. Little as he deserved it of them, the mourning of his people was deep and sincere. Selfish and self-indulgent as he was, a cynic and a sceptic, Charles II. was a shrewd man of the world. Those who were in a position to judge knew that the reins of government had now fallen into the hands of a foolish fanatic, that where Charles had ridden with a snaffle, James would ride with a curb ; the only question was how long he could keep his seat in the saddle. Therefore it behoved the cautious and far-sighted to draw closer the bonds between themselves and the legitimate Protestant heir, William of Orange. It soon became obvious that none but Roman Catholics would be regarded with favour under the new régime. James II.'s suspicions of Sidney had been already frankly expressed, and it is not surprising to find Bentinck writing to condole with him :

"The Hague, February 24, 1685.

"It is with no slight surprise that we have learned of the death of the King before having heard anything of his illness. Our loss is great enough to occupy all our thoughts, and to fill our minds with fear for the Protestant Religion. But the Good God who is its protector holds the hearts of Kings in His hands and inclines them as it is pleasing to Him. I can assure you, Monsieur, in all sincerity, that I share in your sorrow, and feel deeply for the great loss that it is to you. Since the esteem and friendship that I shall have for you all my life are a personal matter, and the outcome of gratitude for the obligations that I am under to you, Monsieur, for a thousand courtesies. You can rest assured that in whatever

state may be your fortunes you will always have my earnest good wishes and I shall always be

"Equally and inalterably yours." [1]

Sidney seems to have been at first graciously received by James, and to have sent a reassuring report to Holland by the hand of M. D'Allonne, for William Bentinck writes again from Dieren :

"I hope you do me enough justice to be persuaded, Monsieur, that it is with great joy that I have seen from your letter to his Highness the kind assurance that the King gave you, that he is as satisfied with you and that you would lose nothing as regards your position. I am very glad too about the course that affairs are taking. His Highness will assuredly do all that the King can expect of him except with regard to Religion. I believe you know him well enough to be aware that he does not generally do things by halves."

In the critical position of European affairs William was especially anxious to maintain a good understanding between himself and his uncle. He had only received from James a notification of his brother's death in a few cold words,[2] and had sent Ouwerkerk to England to apologise for whatever had given him offence. Lawrence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, appears to have been acting ostensibly as intermediary, and his good offices met with some success, for Bentinck writes from the Hague (April 10, 1685) :

"Without the reports that Monsieur d'Ouwerkerck has given us, I can assure you, Monsieur, that I am never deceived in you, having always relied on what you gave me to understand, when I had the honour of seeing you last in England, and on the good disposition that you have for his Highness that you have never been able to show more effectively than in working for his interest with the King. God be praised that that has succeeded so well ; you have had a hand in

[1] Translated from the French of Add. MSS. 32681.

[2] Dalrymple, ii. 11. "I have only time to tell you that it has pleased God Almighty to take out of this world the King my brother. You shall find me as kind as you can expect."

contributing to the establishment of this good and happy union, as much on one side as on the other. You know his Highness's humour, which is to say nothing that he does not think, nor to do things by halves. I assure you that he is disposed to do anything which the King can wish him to do." [1]

The letter continues in a less optimistic strain. Chudleigh's intrigues at Amsterdam in the French interest through d'Avaux had borne fruit, and d'Avaux's orders were to do all that he could in concert with Barillon in London to avert a better relationship between the Prince of Orange and the Duke of York.[2] Hence the concluding paragraph of Bentinck's letter to Rochester :

"We expected here that Amsterdam would have consented to a state of war, as we had been led to hope, but they remain obstinate. I believe that the harangue Mons. Chudleigh made, when he took leave of the States, has contributed to it no little, since that gave them ground for hoping that the agreement was not so solidly made as was said. Dort has followed the example of Amsterdam. M. d'Avaux works hard."

There was one person still more anxious than William, and much more nearly concerned as to his relations with the new King of England, and that was the Duke of Monmouth. Charles, on his deathbed, while recommending to the Duke of York's care all his other children, made no mention of Monmouth. It was said, however, that he had seen him not long before. He had been most kindly received by the Prince of Orange on his return to the Hague at the beginning of January.[3] He had arrived late one evening ; it was thought that he was expected, for Mr. Bentinck went immediately to find him at his hostelry, and brought him to see the Prince, who in spite of the lateness of the hour had received him with every sign of pleasure. Moreover although the Princess had already retired for the night, he insisted on her dressing and coming to the Audience Chamber. The Prince invited Monmouth to lodge at the Mauritz

[1] Clarendon Correspondence, i. 119.
[2] D'Avaux, iv. 67 *seq.*
[3] January 9. See d'Avaux, iv. 211.

Huis and offered him his own servants to attend on him: Mr. Bentinck declared openly that these and other attentions which the Duke continued to receive were paid him with the consent of Charles II. D'Avaux reported that:

"The Prince of Orange did not know how to pay enough attention to the Duke of Monmouth. There were continually new balls and new parties; four or five days ago they were sledging on the ice, with the Princess of Orange at one of the Prince's houses which is three leagues from the Hague; and when they danced, it was the Duke of Monmouth who led out the Princess of Orange. He went regularly every day to the dinner of this Princess, although she eats alone and in private, and afterwards he dined with the Prince of Orange. It was even remarked that the Princess, who never went out walking on foot in public places, went nearly every day in the 'mail' which is in a very agreeable wood at the gates of the Hague, and that M. Monmouth was very regularly there, and nobody could understand how the Prince of Orange who is the most jealous man alive permitted all the airs of gallantry which were observed by everyone between the Princess of Orange and M. de Monmouth."

Monmouth was at the Hague when the news of his father's death arrived there. M. de B., perceiving him in the Prince's ante-chamber in a state of great consternation, expressed the condolences suitable to the occasion,[1] as he notes in his Memoirs. The Prince, with his usual good sense, advised the Duke to endeavour to reinstate himself with the new King and to await what his friends could do for him. There were, however, not wanting mischief-makers in Holland and England to whisper in James's ear hints that the Prince was conniving at the pretensions of the Duke. William meanwhile had requested Monmouth to leave Holland. It was the only course open to him if he wished to avoid a rupture. The King of England was certain to demand his banishment, and very likely his surrender, to which the States would not have consented. The request seemed to come as a surprise to the Duke, who retired as far as Brussels,

[1] "Je lui fit mes compliments sur cette mort."

which he knew could only offer him a temporary asylum, but very shortly returned secretly to Holland.

Chudleigh had been replaced by the still more obnoxious Skelton as Envoy at the Hague. Upon the Duke's retreat to Brussels some papers were said to have been found in his house which disclosed certain proofs of a correspondence between him and Bentinck : [1] so Skelton reported, which gave him "a new jealousy and caused him to be more vigilant than ever."

James meanwhile had taken alarm, and (on April 14) a circuitous letter from Rochester, purporting to be written without the King's knowledge, but evidently sent by his orders, requested the Prince of Orange to remove Monmouth from the Hague, since :

"It cannot be for your Highness's service that it should be imagined he is there with your privity, so it may be presumed that considering the authority your Highness hath, and the good intelligence you cannot be supposed to want, that he can be there and your Highness not know it."

Rochester adds that the King "hath not the intention of ordering him from country to country, and to make all places uneasy to him" ; but, on the other hand, it is neither necessary "nor in truth decent that he should be hovering just over against England, as it were always in a readiness to transport himself." [2] To which William replied, April 30 :

"I can assure you as a man of honour that I have not known and do not know up till now if the Duke of Monmouth is in Holland. It is quite true that it has been said that he was lurking between Rotterdam and Amsterdam and even that he had been at the Hague ; but though I have done what I could to be informed of the truth, I have not been able to learn it."

It is said that Bentinck was sent secretly to Brussels by the Prince of Orange, after Monmouth had retired

[1] Eachard, vol. iii.
See Kramplicht, Imp. Ambassador, to Sidney, March 31, 1679, on Skelton; Blencowe, ii. 19. For William's remonstrance, June 1685, Sidney, ii. 251 ; Dalrymple, ii. 18.
[2] Dalrymple, vol. ii.

there, to give him money and induce him to take service in the Hungarian campaign on the understanding that he should be supplied with the necessary equipment, but that the offer was refused.[1] The unfortunate young man, without judgment or wit to support his vanity and inflated ambition, trusted to that most ephemeral and insubstantial thing, personal popularity, and lent an ear to some of the many malcontent refugees, both Scottish and English, at that time in Holland. Among them was the Duke of Argyle, who was about to start on the ill-fated expedition to raise a rebellion in Scotland which ended in his defeat and execution. Monmouth was persuaded to attempt a simultaneous rising in England. His preparations were ludicrously inadequate, he had been obliged to pawn his jewels for ready money, and his whole following amounted to but eighty-two persons. Some spies of Skelton's brought news that a suspicious vessel was about to leave Amsterdam. Skelton, a bumptious, weak, garrulous man, without taking advice as to the proper method of procedure, went immediately in person to Amsterdam, and applied to the magistrates of that city to stop the ship. She had, however, already left Amsterdam and was beyond their jurisdiction. He was now obliged to do what he should have done at first, provide himself with an order from the Admiralty Headquarters at the Hague, but by this time Monmouth had learned that his intentions were discovered, and he made all haste to set sail from off Texel before the necessary orders could arrive from the Hague to prevent him. This bungling of his own Envoy was attributed by James to connivance by the Prince in Monmouth's enterprise. These suspicions the Prince did his best to remove. He lost no time in sending the King intelligence of the sailing of the expedition and dispatched a memorandum for James's information, with apologies for its being in Dutch, to avoid delay in translation.[2] He offered his services to the King, proposing to bring some troops with him.[3] This was declined, but James asked for the loan of the three Scots regiments then in Holland, to be used against Argyle.[4]

Bentinck wrote to Rochester: "I have informed Mr. Skelton of what I have been able to learn and I will continue

[1] *Collins's Peerage*, ii. Sir Egerton Brydge's Ed.
[2] See Rochester Correspondence.
[3] For James II.'s opinion of this offer, see Clarke's *Life*, ii. 24.
[4] Dalrymple, appendix, vol. ii.

to do so, since the means through which I know what I have been able to learn is very sure." James was, however, deeply imbued with suspicions of his nephew's good faith, and the news that Monmouth's expedition, as well as that of Argyle, had sailed from Amsterdam confirmed them. It became necessary to take stronger measures, and the Prince finally decided to send Bentinck to England. On July 3 he wrote from Honslaerdyck to Rochester acquainting him with his decision :

" I have decided that in this juncture I could not better explain my sentiments to the King than by sending M. de Bentinck, who is fully instructed in them. I hope that you will have the goodness to help him as much by your influence as by your good counsels. He has orders to follow them entirely, as I rely absolutely on your friendship and mine is wholly yours, as the bearer of this letter will assure you more particularly."

Bentinck started the next day, July 14. He was equipped with careful instructions in writing from the Prince as to the line he was to take :

(1) He was to congratulate James II. on his success against the rebels, and to assure him that the Prince's interests were inseparable from his own.

(2) Everyone is forming conjectures as to whence the rebels derived help ; if the King commands it the Prince of Orange will make thorough investigations in order to know the truth.

(3) Further the Prince wishes to know what steps the King wishes to be taken with regard to those who oppose his interests in Holland. He will be guided in all things by the King " so that his Majesty will see that his Highness does not wish to precipitate matters thoughtlessly to a war, but that he will carry out his Majesty's wishes."

This concluding paragraph epitomises Bentinck's mission, the whole intention of which was to remove from James's mind any impression of the complicity of Holland in Monmouth's venture, and to repudiate and punish individual sympathisers. William lost no time in hastening to give these assurances, while the result of the insurrection was still uncertain. It is obvious that the success of Monmouth's enterprise was the very last thing that the Prince

of Orange could have desired, apart from his having good reasons for dissociating himself from it. The Duke's success would have been disastrous to the schemes for the future that the Prince was already maturing. Meanwhile William's immediate anxiety was concerned with Bentinck's safe arrival. When he started a south-west wind was blowing a tempest, and the Prince wrote from Honslaerdyck on July 6 to express his fears that his Ambassador had had a very bad passage. Bentinck wrote from Harwich to inform his master of his arrival, for writing again on the 10th, William alludes to this letter with the account of the terrible storm he had encountered. The Prince was disturbed at the news contained in this letter that Monmouth continued to hold the field and that they hesitated to attack him. "For my part I don't take it for so slight an affair as it seems. Perhaps," the Prince adds, "the danger appears greater from a distance than near at hand." He thinks the King has need of more regular troops,

"and that I may not be altogether useless to him in England, you, who are on the spot, can judge better than I. . . . I have just returned from Rotterdam, where I have reviewed the three English regiments, who are embarking for England if the wind holds good."

Bentinck wrote reassuringly that those most in the King's intimate counsels say he is persuaded that France assisted the rebels, but :

"He does not wish to show his resentment, so much does the position of these affairs give him reason for fearing public assistance for the Duke of Monmouth. Hence he wishes to wait till the rebellion is extinguished, and he is in a position to fear them no longer. . . . The other day I took occasion to say to him, speaking of what the rebels were doing, that one could easily judge from whence their help came ; that his Majesty held Argyle [in his power] ; that apparently he would not die without speaking ; and as it appeared the Duke of Monmouth would be taken also."

To which the King replied that Bentinck was right, and that he would make known his views to the Prince of

Orange; that when Argyle's confession came, he would talk to Bentinck of several things with great frankness. Meanwhile, adds Bentinck, the King takes very little notice of the French Ambassador—"ne lui parlant que très peu."

The Prince of Orange was to some extent reassured by his Ambassador's report, and was glad to learn that he had been so well received by the King, though with his habitual caution he expresses himself as still uneasy about the position, for Monmouth is not so easy to beat as Argyle. The letter continues: "I fear greatly that they despise him [Monmouth] too much, and that thus they may deceive themselves, and not employ the right means, but people who reason at a distance like myself deceive themselves still more easily." In conclusion the Prince regrets that Bentinck is obliged to stay longer, but must trust to his judgment.

Three days later the Prince's impatience for his friend's return had waxed considerably, and he writes on July 17 to say in effect that if this Monmouth affair is going to last much longer, Bentinck had better come back without waiting to see the end of it. He is, however, still apprehensive as to the outcome of the Rebellion. "Faversham is a very brave honest man," but William doubts whether he has enough experience for such a big affair as that he has on hand, and adds, "I am not free from anxiety."

Monmouth's attempt at raising the standard of rebellion in the West soon ended in disaster. After Faversham's defeat of the rebels at Sedgemoor, July 6, the Duke was brought a prisoner to London. James, with the vindictiveness characteristic of him, indulged in the useless cruelty of allowing his captive to sue at his knees for mercy before his execution; and acquiesced in, even applauded, the contemptible vengeance inflicted on Monmouth's poor and ignorant supporters by "The Bloody Assizes." [1]

Bentinck's representations to James of his master's sincerity and loyalty had not produced all the effect he believed and hoped them to have done. What the King really thought is reflected in the following passage from his life:

[1] See Burnet on Dyckvelt's description of James II.'s attitude to Jeffrey's conduct.

"His Majesty saw how he [the Prince of Orange] had underhand assisted the Duke of Monmouth and yet no man seemed more delighted at his ruin, for Mons: Bentinck, whom that Prince had sent upon this occasion to the King with many professions of kindness, and proffers of service, was in a grievous agony when he understood the King was resolved to see the Duke as soon as he was made a prisoner; and tho' after enquiry, he found he had said nothing of what he aprehended in relation to his master, yet he was never at quiet till his head was struck off."

These accusations are sufficiently refuted by William's letters to Bentinck and by Monmouth's own letter of appeal to James for mercy after he was taken prisoner: "For my taking up arms, it never was in my thought since the King dy'd. The Prince and Princess of Orange will be my witness of the assurance I gave them, that I should never stir against you."

William alludes to this assurance in a letter to Rochester: "I never believed the Duke of Monmouth capable of such an action after the assurances that he gave me to the contrary when he took leave of me."

Monmouth's rebellion was, after all, not the only, not even the principal, business with which Bentinck was concerned on this visit to England. The Prince of Orange never lost sight of the momentous questions of European politics to which all other matters were of subsidiary interest. The Ambassador was provided with notes of points to be discussed with Rochester, as the man who stood highest in the King's favour at the moment, and professed zeal and fidelity both to the King and the Prince. A subservient, slippery man, it is difficult to say how far William really believed he might be trusted. Bentinck's notes for an interview with the Lord Treasurer, as he now was, are written in a neat small hand and headed "Memoyre."

"Points à parler au Grand Tresorier le 18 Juillet." Most important among the matters enumerated are:

(1) The conduct of France towards England.

(2) What support the Prince of Orange may expect.

(3) To recommend to the Treasurer the interest of his Highness to whom the King has as yet given no public mark of his kindness.

(4) Touching "Schelton."[1]

The Prince of Orange had meanwhile received intelligence of the failure of Monmouth's expedition and was already impatient for his Ambassador's return. He writes from Honslaerdyck, July 20, that if Bentinck has not already left, he is to leave as soon as he receives this letter; and continues: "God be praised for the good success that the troops of the King have had against the rebels. I do not doubt that this affair will be entirely suppressed, God grant that the King's reign will be happy."

Four days later, on July 24, the Prince writes again: "I am surprised that you are not so near your departure as I had believed, the rebellion now being entirely suppressed by the capture of Monmouth, for which God be praised." The Prince adds that as he believes that the King will soon send back the six regiments,[2] Bentinck had better represent to the King or his Ministers the harm that will be done in Holland if the King recommends Roman Catholic officers to be put in the places that will fall vacant in the future.[3]

After his return home Bentinck wrote to Rochester from Dieren (August 10) with regard to the rebels in Holland, against whom James II. wished measures taken. He asks for their names and the depositions against them, "without which his Highness would not have the power to do it, according to the constitution of our Government." With regard to Lord Pembroke whom James recommends, Bentinck points out politely the difficulty there would be in persuading the States to give him command of the English troops, as Lord Pembroke is a young man "who has seen no service and would perhaps be of no use to the King at the head of these regiments."

After his return from England, Mr. Bentinck tried to show his sense of Lord Rochester's good services while he was there by a present in kind. "Some little barrels of wine that I am sending by Mr. Sidney from my cellar."[4]

[1] The Prince had already made strong representations concerning Skelton and his unsuitability for the position of Envoy. He knew that the Envoy was in correspondence with those hostile to his own interests. Burnet, in the unpublished pages of his narrative, describes Skelton as: "A very insignificant minister, who notwithstanding his long practice in foreign affairs had as little capacity for them as he had either good judgment or probity."

[2] The Scottish and English regiments in the Dutch service.

[3] The Prince refused to give the command to Lord Carlingford, a Roman Catholic. Dalrymple, ii.

[4] Add. MSS. 15892.

Once Bentinck had returned, and the Monmouth affair had run its melancholy course, the Dutch Court might have reasonably expected a peaceful and pleasant hunting season at Dieren, but the year 1685 was destined to be harassing till its end. James II. has been accused of sowing discord between the Prince and Princess.[1] This was easy, for Skelton, who served the double purpose of spy and mischief-maker, was still at the Hague. It will be remembered that gossip coupling the Prince's name with that of Elizabeth Villiers had been rife some time before. The Princess, so it was said, had resorted to the expedient of dispatching the notorious "Betty" to England as bearer of a letter to the King, in which she appealed to her father to shut her up. The Prince forebore any comment on his return home, but Miss Villiers, on arriving at Harwich, suspected something, and took the next boat back to Holland without delivering the letter.[2]

A letter from Bentinck to Sydney of October 11th throws further light on this report. Elizabeth Villiers did go to England, and her father, Sir Edward, insisted on her return to the Hague, and wrote to the Prince and Princess begging them to take her back to Court. The Princess refused to receive her. Bentinck expresses extreme indignation at her proceedings and forbade his wife Anne to see her. His anger was heightened by a "spiteful and unrestrained" letter from their sister-in-law Barbara, which he had opened and found full of abuse of himself. Bentinck himself expostulated with Elizabeth on her return, and "let her know the pain and resentment that I have in seeing that by her own choice and the wish of her father she pursues a course of conduct so opposed to her interests, to her honnour, and to what she promised me in speaking."

It is doubtful whether Mary had believed this affair could be blown over. At any rate, she was now incited to take more active measures. Through the instrumentality of Skelton some of the Princess's servants were suborned, notably her nurse, and the nurse's son, also Dr. Covel, who had succeeded Ken as Court Chaplain, a low-class man suitable for the Envoy's tool in such an affair. These, together

[1] M. de B. "En lui donnant de la jalousie sur la conduite du Prince."

[2] Quoted by Fruin from *Mémoires de la Famille et de la Vie de Madame* in his notes to Droste. This book is not in the British Museum. It is by Mme. de Zouterlande (1710).

with two of the Ladies-in-Waiting, were induced to inform the Princess of her husband's intrigue with Elizabeth Villiers. The Princess, armed with proofs of her husband's misconduct, unwisely lent herself to the designs of his enemies, by raising a scandal which was certain to become public. She lay in wait for the Prince on a back staircase which led to the apartments of the Maids of Honour. At about two o'clock in the morning, the Prince, descending the stairs, was surprised to find his wife standing there and began to reproach her. She only responded with tears and retired to her own room. Of course the story soon leaked out. Skelton, delighted at the success of his enterprise, hastened to inform James of it, and James improved the occasion. The atmosphere of the Court became very strained and gloomy —("tout étoit dans la cour au grand sérieux"). Mr. Bentinck found himself in the embarrassing position of confidant of the Prince and brother-in-law to the culprit. He was anxious to exculpate himself with the Princess, and through his well-meaning but indiscreet attempts at self-justification incurred her deep resentment, and remained for some time in disgrace. Perhaps the Princess was aware that Elizabeth Villiers was frequently seen, "her head envelopped in a scarf in the Flemish fashion," passing through the apartments of Mr. Bentinck on her way to those of the Prince. But the light-minded Maids of Honour and the contemptible Skelton had not counted the cost of their mischief making. William was not the man to pass over lightly any affront, much less one that arose in his own household. Subtle and resourceful, he was not long in reflecting that the Princess would not have taken the step on her own initiative. He in his turn set a watch upon her servants. Employing the time-honoured ruse of oriental romance, the Prince went out hunting one morning, the Court being then at Dieren, leaving some of his own servants to watch all who came from the house. The intriguers fell into the trap. Afraid to send their letters by the ordinary post, they transmitted them to Skelton. It was not long before the Prince's guard intercepted a valet from the Court conveying a packet of letters to the English Envoy.

Armed with the intercepted letters, the Prince called the Princess into his Cabinet, and shutting the door [1] asked her

[1] This detail suggests that Mr. Bentinck's Cornet of Horse (M. de B.) was listening at the keyhole.

if she was aware that her servants were trying to accomplish their separation. The Princess, with a dignity and self-control which well became her, replied that she had shut up her grief in her own heart, without ever having communicated it to anyone. That she knew how to suffer and be silent. The Prince, evidently touched, sought to reassure her. "What has given you so much pain is merely an amusement, there is no crime in it," he said, and added, "Hé bien, if you believe the oath that I now make to you before God, not to violate the faith I have given you, you will abandon your servants to my just resentment." The Princess, softened by his promise, threw herself dissolved in tears upon his neck, assuring him of her ignorance of the action of her servants in this correspondence, and giving him leave to act as he thought fit. The Prince sent for the plotters singly, and confronted them with their letters, the authorship of which the nurse, Madame Langfort, and her son denied; reproached them with their ingratitude and gave them two hours in which to pack. The two Ladies-in-Waiting were Miss Trelawney and Miss Franklin, and a young man about the Court, one Verace, was also concerned in the plot. He is described elsewhere by James II. as "a creature of Bentinck's," but it would rather appear that he was a creature of Skelton's from James's own account of him.[1] Verace was a man of untrustworthy character, and was subsequently dismissed from the Dutch Court on account of accusations he brought to Bentinck against the Villiers' brother Edward, afterwards created Earl of Jersey.

They were all dispatched to England early the next morning before anyone was aware of what had happened. Of the party was a Mrs. Jetson, of whom a story is told characteristic of the manners of the time, especially of Dutch humour. Mrs. Jetson was a comely widow whose hand was sought in marriage by a certain Captain Cunningham. The widow demanded as a proof of his affection that he should wade up to his neck, fully dressed, into the Vyver, the lake before the Mauritz Huis at the Hague, in broad daylight, an equivalent to asking a man to walk into the Serpentine with all his clothes on in the height of the season. The love-sick sailor consented to this ordeal, the Court assembled in the windows of the Binnen-Hof which

[1] See *Life of James II.*, vol. ii. 176.

overlooks the Vyver to see the fun, invited to do so by Mrs. Jetson herself. Captain Cunningham faithfully gave the proof of his affection, but she, "who was malicious," after all refused to fulfil the bargain.[1]

The whole story of the Villiers scandal made savoury gossip in England, and the part taken in it by the Bentincks seems to have been ill-naturedly exaggerated. The line adopted by Edward Villiers on this occasion can only be guessed at from Bentinck's condemnation of it in the following intimate letter to Sidney written from Dieren on October 22:

"You will be extremely surprised to learn of the changes that have taken place in our Court. His Highness accidently had a letter, which showed that Dr. Covel had for a long time been a malicious spy in the household, injuriously reporting many concocted stories; thereupon her Royal Highness had him dismissed, without giving him any other punishment because of his cloth; and as it is clearly discovered that Madame Longfort and Miss Trelawney were in league with him, Madame has sent them away also this morning. It is a horrible thing that people can be wicked enough to injure those to whom they owe their bread, but much worse that ministers should be capable of it. The second chaplain, Longfort, is also in the plot. I don't complain of the malice of people who have born witness against me after seeing that they betray their master and mistress. I beg you will write and tell me if you have spoken to anyone of the story that has been charitably made at our expense, as if we had failed to pay our respects to her Royal Highness correctly on our arrival at Honslaerdyck, that I may know what has been said. I cannot tell you anything about our affair except that it is not ended; but I have no occasion to be pleased with my brother-in-law."

Bentinck had no reason to be proud of any of his Villiers connections. His brother-in-law, afterwards Lord Jersey,

[1] Droste.

married Barbara, daughter of the notorious Chiffinch, much to his disapproval—"Seer tegen 't goedvinden van Benting." [1]

The Prince himself sent an account of the affair to Rochester, requesting Skelton's recall:

"Dieren, October 22, 1685.

"I am sorry to be obliged to write to you about an affair which has taken place here; having had many reasons to suspect that the Chaplain of the Princess, Dr. Covell, was neither an honest man nor a faithful servant, and being lately at the Hague [2] there fell into my hands a letter written by him to Mr. Schelton that I opened; and on my return here I took the doctor's cipher, and made him decipher as you will see from the enclosed copy. You will doubtless be surprised that a man of this profession can be so great a knave. I own that I have been greatly deceived in this man, of whom I had a very good opinion when he came here at first, and have always treated him very civilly, about which he publicly boasted in order the better to deceive me. The Princess and I have done nothing but dismiss him, leaving his punishment to his Bishop. I consider that I have good reason to complain of Mr. Schelton in this business, for having been willing to carry on such a correspondence from my house; you can judge well whether after this I can continue to live on good terms with him, although I shall not fail in what I owe to his character, without which I should assuredly treat him very differently. But I hope that the King will do me the kindness to remove him from here, which I beg you to entreat his Majesty on my behalf." [3]

[1] Fruin's Notes to Droste, vol. ii. 469, who said, "Que Chiffinch estoit un homme qui luy levoit la portière quand l'occasion s'en rencontroit." In intelligence at least Jersey was much his wife's inferior, and later on Tallard wrote to Louis XIV: "The Earl of Jersey is appointed Ambassador to your Majesty. He is a very agreeable man, but has a very limited understanding. His wife is very clever, she is a Catholic, and will accompany him."

[2] There is a slight discrepancy between the Prince's account and that of Droste.

[3] Clarendon Correspondence, vol. i. 163–4.

The Prince enclosed the intercepted letter [1] but his remonstrance produced little effect.

James contented himself with sending a message through Rochester that "he will consent at some convenient time to gratify your Highness," but meanwhile hopes that Mr. Skelton may "have the same continuance of favour from your Highness as is necessary for his Majesty's Minister always to have." [2] As Burnet says, James II. found that Skelton "managed his affairs in Holland with so little sense and gave such a universal distaste that he resolved to change him, but he had been so sensibly addicted to all his interests that he would not discourage him." [3] He had cause to regret it later on.

The dismissal of the discordant elements from the Court, and the frank explanation between the Prince and Princess were the beginning of a closer and more intimate understanding between them; an understanding that was rendered complete by the good offices of Dr. Gilbert Burnet, who took refuge at the Hague about this time.[4] William had always resented the fact that if he succeeded to the throne of England it would be by right of his wife. Pride and reserve kept him from ever discussing this question openly with her. It remained for Dr. Burnet, impulsive and often indiscreet as he was, to explain the position of affairs to the Princess. He found her not only ignorant of the fact, but almost incredulous that it could be so. Sending for the Prince, she assured him that he should always bear rule. Thus was laid between these two, so unequally mated, the foundation of that deep trust and affection which ended only with the death of the Princess.

[1] Dr. Covel to Mr. Skelton. Dieren, October 5–15, 1685. "Your honour may be astonished at the news, but it is too true that the Princesse's heart is like to break, and yet she every day with Mrs. Jetson and Madame Zuleystein counterfeits the greatest joy and looks upon us as dogged as may be, we dare no more speak to her; the Prince hath infallibly made her a complete slave, and theres an end of it. . . . The Princesse is just now junketing with Madame Bentinck and Mrs. Jetson in Madame Zuleystein's Chamber."—Rochester Correspondence, i. 165.

[2] Correspondance de Madame, September 2, 1718. "La Reine Marie d'Angleterre a été un peu coquette en Hollande. L'Ambassadeur de France, le Comte d'Avaux m'a raconte à moi-meme qu'il se voyait en secret chez une de ses dames d'honneur *Mme. de Tresslaire*. Le Prince d'Orange le sut, et chassa la dame d'honneur sous un autre pretexte; il ne se souciait pas que l'affaire transpirât."

[3] Burnet.

[4] Afterwards Bishop of Salisbury. He had incurred the displeasure of James for a sermon against Popery.

Henceforth the Prince reposed much trust in Burnet, though he never unbent to him, and the good Doctor's tactless garrulity must at times have irritated him. Burnet did William good service besides in reassuring the English as to his broad and tolerant religious views. It was not long before reports reached James of the confidence accorded to Dr. Burnet at the Hague, and he wrote to remonstrate with Mary so strongly that Burnet was ostensibly forbidden the Court, though the Prince remained in constant communication with him.

The outlook abroad in the year 1686 was more than usually disquieting. It was evident that no help was to be expected from England against France, as James II. was already forcing Popery upon his people by the series of unconstitutional Acts that resulted in the Revolution of 1688. The Emperor was still preoccupied with the war against the Turks. Louis XIV. appeared to be at the summit of his power. It was not at first apparent that with the passing of his greatest ministers and generals and the growing ascendancy of Madame de Maintenon, it was already beginning to decline. Towards the close of 1685 Louis XIV. startled Europe by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the Charter of Liberties of French Protestants. He had defeated his own ends. The French aggressions of the last few years, together with this crowning act of religious intolerance, enabled William of Orange to form the League of Augsburg for the maintenance of the Treaties of Westphalia and Nimeguen. It was joined originally by the Emperor Leopold, and the Kings of Spain and Sweden. Later by the Elector of Brandenburg, who had already concluded a Treaty of Alliance with the United Provinces the year before,[1] but who was induced by French religious intolerance to reverse his temporary policy, and for the last three years of his life remained loyal to the Protestant interests of Europe.

Bentinck was at the Prince's hunting-lodge at Dieren in the spring, for he wrote a long letter from there in April to Henry Sidney welcoming a proposed visit from him to Holland. The letter does not touch on current political events, perhaps it was indiscreet to do so at the moment. There was very general distrust among the Prince's supporters in England of Sidney's nephew, Lord Sunderland. They

[1] August 1685.

feared that Sunderland was in the Prince's confidence, and they believed he would betray them all, for he was as unscrupulous as he was clever.[1] At any rate Bentinck alludes only to quite unimportant matters, and small commissions with which he had been entrusted :

"Dieren ce 18 d'Avril, 1686.

" I assure you that it is with the greatest joy and pleasure that I think of the journey that you promise me you will take. I believe it would be difficult for you to go to a place where you would be as welcome. We go to Loo at the beginning of next week, where I believe we shall remain till the beginning of May, when we shall return for the ' Kermesse ' [2] at the Hague, and afterwards we shall go to Honslaerdyke. The boat which is gone up the Rhein to get provisions for his Highness is expected in 15 days. You must think if you please at your leisure of some good opportunity before the hot weather comes for then wines do not travel so well.

" I beg you to tell ' Monsieur the Lord Treasurer ' [Rochester] that it is not my fault if there is much delay ; I hope he will be better served, if he wishes for some other kinds he has only to choose. There will be Hochem, Bacherach, Rinchonio and Moselle, and I believe there will also be some Deele Wyn which is esteemed in England as it seems to me. You have only to order what you want and for a very small profit I will serve you. I beg you not to forget my Palma wine before the hot weather comes." [3]

The lack of correspondence between Bentinck and the Prince for this year points to their having been continually together. Only one letter has been preserved, written by the Prince from Breda on July 19 :

" My throat trouble continues, though it does not increase, for the rest I am well, and have great impatience to

[1] Sunderland succeeded in replacing Rochester in the King's confidence January 1686.

[2] *Kermesse* or Kermis, a fair. In the seventeenth century it was a time of merry-making and enjoyment in which everyone shared. William did not omit to be present at the Hague for it if it were in any way possible. The fun of the Kermesse centred in the festal procession of the Schuttery or National Guards.

[3] Add. MSS. 32681.

embrace you (étant à vous comme je suis) G." A postscript adds: "I have forgotten to tell you that with regard to the term for the payment of the diamond necklace, that a year is too little, and that you must condition for more time, even if I were obliged to pay some small interest."

In August took place the visit of William of Orange to the Great Elector Frederick William of Brandenburg at Cleves, at which it has been thought probable that the scheme for an undertaking against James II. was first discussed. At that time William had neither an army nor a fleet that would have rendered any such scheme possible. One aim of the meeting, at all events, was the discussion of the affair of Orange, in which the Elector had an interest by the right of inheritance of the children of his first marriage with Princess Louise of Orange. Later on William entertained the Elector with a review of troops at Nimeguen. Brandenburg's second son by his second marriage,[1] Prince Philip, paid a visit to Holland towards the end of this year. He arrived in the Hague at the beginning of December and occupied Ginkel's house there. Jaucourt[2] who accompanied him mentions "three or four Comtes de Benthen," as among the most frequent visitors of the young Prince; probably they were nephews of Hans Willem. Everything possible was done to show attention to the young "Prins Flips" as Droste calls him, and William came himself to visit him on his arrival in the Hague.

A fortnight later Prince Philip paid a visit of ceremony to the Prince and Princess of Orange at Loo, where "Monsieurs de Bentem and d'Overkercke, accompanied by numerous officers, received him at the foot of the staircase." Afterwards he went three times a week to Court to the Princess, who played cards or danced with him. "In order that he might pass his time pleasantly at the Hague, the Princess prepared amusement for him at the Castle in the Wood.[3] There he accompanied her at the dance in the evening." Among his comrades were "le comte de Bentem," possibly, as he is mentioned separately, the little Henry Bentinck, and the sons of Ginkel and of Ouwkerk. When the Court returned to the Hague for the Kermesse early in

[1] With Dorothea of Holstein-Glücksberg.
[2] *Mémoires de Jaucourt*, quoted by Fruin.
[3] "The House in the Wood," the residence of the Princess at the Hague.

May the little Prince sat with Mary at the window to see the procession of the Schuttery wearing orange scarves and firing salutes. Afterwards everyone went to walk masked in the Buitenhof, the great square of the Hague, outside the old Palace of the Counts of Holland, the Binnenhof. Here booths had been erected at which many-coloured favours could be bought. He or she to whom one was presented had to guess the identity of the giver. Mary entered thoroughly into the fun of the fair and changed her dress several times, that she might not be recognised. When the Court went to Honslaerdyck in the late spring, Prince Philip went several times a week there and the Princess danced English dances. In the autumn, when the Brandenburg party began the return journey to Germany, they were entertained to dinner at "Trylingen," a house owned by William Bentinck in his capacity as First Huntsman.

This glimpse of the lighter side of Court life comes in the midst of the anxious and strenuous preparations which William was making from now onwards for the coming struggle with France; preparations cunningly obstructed by d'Avaux, who stirred up opposition in Amsterdam to the grant of funds for naval and military purposes.

In England meanwhile, where James's reckless subversion of the laws was alienating all parties, men began to look more and more towards the Protestant heir-presumptive in Holland. Possibly on the advice of Burnet, William found it expedient about this time to send over an emissary who should assure a good understanding between himself and them. The choice fell on Dykvelt, a man of considerable ability, much diplomatic experience and insinuating manners. When the Prince and Princess were obliged by James's representations to avoid personal intercourse with Burnet, communications were carried on with him principally through the medium of Dykvelt. The Prince alludes to this mission of Dykvelt in a letter to Bentinck early in 1687 (March 15). The Envoy had evidently reported on his success in England to Fagel, the Pensionary, who had given his letter to Mr. Bentinck at the Hague to be submitted to the Prince. The Prince was at Loo. His mind is full of yesterday's run, and the prospects for to-morrow's hunt. Dykvelt's mission has only a subsidiary interest for the moment. The Prince had come to Loo, as he writes, to hunt.

The day before yesterday he had taken a stag, but the chase was interrupted by nightfall. The Princess and all the Court had arrived, but terrible wind and rain had put a stop to hunting. He then continues on more serious topics: "I return to M. the Pensionary the letter of M. Dykvelt, which he must keep. I am not surprised at his scruples about hastening to speak to the King about the grand affair of religion."

The mission of Dykvelt had not escaped the lynx-eyed d'Avaux, and writing on this subject to Louis XIV. he has also made the discovery that Burnet was not really "chassé" and that Mr. Bentinck was now acting as intermediary between him and the Prince.

"I discovered that the Prince of Orange had great conferences during the six days he was at the Hague with the most factious among the English who were in Holland, and that Dr. Burnet, whom the Prince of Orange had apparently expelled from his Court, on the urgent representations that the King of England had made to him about it, was continually closeted with Benting."

Burnet makes curiously little mention of Bentinck, seldom alluding to him, a fact that can hardly have been accidental, and may not impossibly have been due to discretion,[1] as again in April d'Avaux mentions the "very long and very frequent conferences that he had with 'Benting.'"

Dykvelt's mission to England was accomplished with great dexterity and attended with success. Ostensibly he was to convince James of the friendly intentions of Holland and to smooth away any distrust and irritation that existed in his mind against his son-in-law. His secret instructions,

[1] In a passage of the *History of His Own Time* which he suppressed, Burnet gives the following character of W. Bentinck. [Harl. MSS. 6584]. "I do do not know him well enough to say much concerning him . . . yet by all I could ever discern, the Prince has shewed a very true judgement of persons in placing so much of his confidence on him."

"He is a man of a great probity and sincerity and is as close as his master is. He bears his favour with great modesty, and has nothing of that haughtiness that seems to belong to all favourites. He is a virtuous and religious man—and though Commonwealths can ill bear any inequality of favour that is lodged in one person, yet I never heard any that are in the Government of the towns of Holland complain of him."

drafted by Burnet, were to convey to the people generally with a favourable impression of the Prince and to remove any existing prejudice against him, to assure the Church on the one hand that he would support their privileges, and the Dissenters on the other that they might expect full toleration from him.

In April James II. published the Declaration of Indulgence suspending the penal Statutes against Roman Catholics and Dissenters. In June William and Mary definitely refused to consent to the abolition of the Test when invited to do so by James,[1] an action which was greatly resented by him.

James sent over to the Hague a Scottish Presbyterian called Stuart, or Stewart, a man of ability and eloquence, who after having favourably impressed William and the Pensionary, returned to England and wrote a number of letters to a friend of Fagel's urging the Pensionary to use his influence with William to conciliate James II. by aiding him to abolish the Test Act and the Penal Laws against Nonconformists, since the Catholics were too few in number to be a source of danger. These letters gave rise to a report that the Prince was in agreement with the Court party in England, and necessitated an official reply which was drawn up by Fagel. Fagel replied on behalf of the Prince and Princess of Orange, November 1687, that :

"No Christian ought to be persecuted for his conscience . . . yet all Politick bodies had ever made laws to secure the established Religion, and their own safety, by excluding the enemies thereof from all public employments, and the Test being of that nature declared they could not consent to have it abrogated." [2]

It is to this that the following letter of William to Bentinck refers.

Loo, September 21. After saying that he has written to the Pensionary approving his proposed answer to Stuart, the Prince continues :

"It would not be a bad thing that it should be communicated to Dr. Burnet, who not only knows the affairs of England through and through ; but I do not see any-

[1] See letter of William to James. Dalrymple, ii. June 1687.
[2] *Life of James II.*, vol. i. 134–5.

body more suitable to translate it into English in order to print it afterwards or publish it."

While James's actions in England became increasingly provocative, William strove to complete his schemes for an expedition to England when the time should be ripe, and to prepare for the defence of Holland in his absence. Preparations for both were conducted by him with every precaution. The French Court was, nevertheless, continually well informed of all that took place. In August, for instance, d'Avaux reported that the Prince was occupied in trying to raise funds for providing an additional nine thousand men for the navy and twenty-five new men-of-war. He feared the Prince would succeed in doing so in spite of hostility to the scheme in Amsterdam, where his friends assured him of their continued goodwill to France.[1] But his reports fell on strangely deaf ears. It was as though both James II. and Louis XIV. were smitten with an impenetrable obtuseness.

[1] D'Avaux, vi. 78 *seq.*

CHAPTER V.—1687–1688

PREPARATIONS FOR THE EXPEDITION TO ENGLAND—BENTINCK'S GERMAN MISSIONS

At the close of the year 1687 only two Dutchmen besides William Bentinck were in the secret of the Prince's schemes with regard to England, the Pensionary Fagel and Dykvelt; but as the months passed on and the English became increasingly restive under James II.'s misrule, the appeals of the Prince's supporters grew more frequent and imperative. The number of Englishmen of standing coming and going from the Hague was in itself sufficient to excite remark among astute observers.

Of the three men in his secret counsels William's most important coadjutor was Bentinck, and this year two highly confidential and important missions were entrusted to him. It was essential for William to secure the co-operation of the neighbouring German Princes for the defence of his frontiers in his absence. By far the most important and powerful among them was, of course, the Prince's kinsman and ally, Frederick William, "The Great Elector" of Brandenburg. On him mainly depended the defence of the Dutch frontier against France, on the troops, that is, which he would consent to provide for a price, while William was absent on the expedition to England, for Louis XIV.'s obvious course was to make a simultaneous descent on Holland. D'Avaux was aware that negotiations to this end were taking place through one of Brandenburg's generals as early as March 6. In April, however, the Great Elector died and was succeeded by his son, Frederick II. Bentinck was dispatched to Berlin, ostensibly to offer to the new Elector condolences on the death of his father. His visit was delayed by the serious illness of his wife.

On April 29 the Prince writes from Loo on his return from hunting a stag that we took "avec bien de plaisir":

"I learn with very much concern [1] that Madame your wife continues so ill, may God grant you the grace of seeing her soon happily delivered, and that she and the child may get on well.

"Mr. Herbert and the two Russells have been here, I do not tell you what they said, because that could be better done by word of mouth."

"Mr. Herbert" is, of course, Rear-Admiral Arthur Herbert, afterwards Lord Torrington, member for Dover and Master of the Robes, who had been dismissed by James II. from all his offices on his refusal to vote for the repeal of the Test Act. He was a good sailor, very popular in the Navy, and his adherence was of great importance to the Prince. One of the "two Russells" was Edward Russell, also a sailor, and afterwards Admiral of the Fleet and Earl of Orford.[2] He was a nephew of William Russell, first Duke of Bedford, and therefore cousin to the Lord William Russell who had been executed for alleged complicity in the Rye House Plot. Edward Russell had been in the counsels of Dykvelt during his mission to England. The other Russell was most likely Lord William's brother, another Edward Russell generally called "Mr." Russell, one of the first men to join the Prince after his landing. It may be easily understood that the Prince forebore to commit to writing the secret intelligence received from such important emissaries.

A fortnight later the Prince wrote again, a letter full of sympathy and consideration, regretting that Madame Bentinck's illness was so long continued. If he has not already left, he assuredly should not leave his wife in the state in which she is, "I should not wish it on any account."

Mr. Bentinck must have left, notwithstanding this injunction, for the next letter, written from the Hague by the Prince six days later, hopes "that this will find you happily arrived at Berlin," and adds that there is no English news of importance.

Meanwhile the indefatigable d'Avaux had acquainted

[1] "Desplaisir."

[2] He accompanied William to England. He signs himself, "Secrétaire Anglais de son Altesse."

himself with the true meaning of Mr. Bentinck's visit to Berlin, for he writes on May 31 :

" I have heard on very good authority that the Elector of Brandenburg had asked the Prince of Orange to send him someone trustworthy, and thereupon M. Benting went. I do not doubt that this was in order to confide to him the designs of the Prince of Orange that he had not communicated to the Prince his father." [1]

William Bentinck received the most cordial reception in Berlin. The Elector was ready and willing to lend his aid. He expressed his zeal for the success of the great undertaking, and his hearty compliance with the Prince's wishes. A defensive project was discussed in which the Landgrave of Cassel was to be primarily counted upon for the defence of the Middle Rhine, while the Lower Rhine was to be covered by Brandenburg.[2]

The Prince kept his Ambassador continually informed of all that was passing in his absence. On May 26 he forwarded an extract from a letter received the day before from the Prince de Waldeck " . . . from which you will see his views on the conduct of affairs at the Court where you are, which may be useful to you, as he certainly knows them well."

George Frederick of Waldeck had formerly been in the service of the Great Elector, and had once observed to Henry Sidney : " With the Elector of Brandenburg there is nothing to be done without money." [3] The States had engaged his services as General in 1672. Burnet describes him as a man of true judgment, equally able in the Cabinet and the camp. In spite of his great abilities Waldeck had the reputation of ill luck in his military commands, a reputation that carried with it its own fulfilment, for it shook the confidence of the men whom he commanded. M. de B. describes him as having even at an advanced age soldierly and distinguished bearing. " His Highness had so great a confidence in him that neither his ill success nor the jealousy of his enemies could diminish the esteem in which he held him." When he was Governor of Maestricht his garrison was the school of the service.[4]

[1] D'Avaux, May 31, 1688.
[2] Droysen iv. i. pp. 29 *seq.*
[3] Blencowe, March 1680, vol. ii. 3.
[4] See William to Heinsuis on his death, December 1692

While Bentinck was engaged on the Berlin negotiations, a simultaneous mission was entrusted to M. van Reede, Lord of Amerongen, a practised diplomatist, at the Court of the Elector of Saxony, John George. It is to this that the Prince alludes in a letter written early in June, but undated, and so cautiously worded as to be very ambiguous : " If you find things so disposed that certain measures can be taken—one cannot be sure of what you have done at Berlin—it is absolutely necessary that I should see the Elector as soon as possible. . . . M. d'Amerongen writes from Aix that he hopes very soon to conclude the Treaty with the Minister of the Elector of Saxony." George III. of Saxony had visited the Hague recently and was surprised and delighted with his reception. His visit in May was celebrated by entertainments characteristic of the age. Droste, who was present at a dinner given by William in the Elector's honour, comments with pride on the fact that the host was less intoxicated than the guest. He was treated in every respect as an equal and was seated in an armchair at table on the Prince's right. On this occasion the Prince of Orange had entered into very close relations with him, which subsequently bore fruit. After d'Amerongen's negotiations at Aix-la-Chapelle George III. of Saxony sent his Ambassador to Berlin to express his wish for a closer combination within the Empire, and in August the two Electors met to discuss what measures were to be taken.

On June 4 the Prince wrote again from Honslaerdyck : " To renew the Alliance between the Elector and this State " —on Frederick III.'s accession. " This will be done by Mr. Hop, who will have immediate authorisation for that." Hop, Pensionary of Amsterdam, had been sent to Berlin early in 1687 to draw closer the relationship between Brandenburg and William.[1] The letter continues :

" Tell the Landgrave [of Hesse-Cassel] that this State wishes him to enter the Treaty we are making with the Elector of Saxony ; and that we hope to make with Zell and Wolfenbüttel ; if the Spaniards will subsidise Zell and Wolfenbüttel, as I hope, he shall have his share.

[1] D'Avaux, vi. 57.

"The affair of the Bishops may bring matters to extremities." [1]

The German Princes with whom Bentinck was occupied were very much of a family party. Two brothers, Dukes Antoine and Rudolph, governed jointly Brunswick and Wolfenbüttel. The Dukes of Zell (or Celle) and Hanover, also brothers, represented the younger branch of the House of Brunswick. Hanover, to give him his full title, Duke Ernst, August, von Braunschweig-Lüneburg zu Hanover, had married the Princess Sophia, a Protestant, and granddaughter of James I.,[2] but was allied to France.

The next extant letter from the Prince to Bentinck is endorsed by him, "received at Hanover 16th of June."

It is more than usually explicit:

"Honslaerdyck, June 7. The Elector of Cologne is dead. France will try to cause the election of Cardinal Fürstenberg by Force of Arms. If the Emperor and the Princes of the Empire suffer the Chapter to be forced as at Munster, Hildesheim and Liège, they must no more think of German liberty. But how to prevent it? I own it will be very difficult now that the armies of the Emperor are engaged in war with Turkey. M. l'Electeur must without loss of time take counsel with his neighbours. You must discuss this matter with the Princes and Ministers at Cassel, Cell and Hanover."

This letter emphasises the fact that William relied on Brandenburg for rallying the German Princes to present a united front to France in defence of Protestantism and the integrity of the Empire, and makes it clear that on Bentinck's

[1] This refers to the famous Seven English Bishops who petitioned James II. against having to read his illegal "Declaration of Indulgence," suspending the penal statutes against Roman Catholics and Protestant dissenters on May 18. Their trial, which followed, actually did bring matters to a climax, as William predicted.

[2]
James I.
|
Elizabeth = Frederick Elector Palatine
|
Sophia = Ernest Augustus Duke of Hanover
|
George I. of England = Sophia Dorothea
(her 1st cousin) of Zell

conduct of his mission everything, the success or failure of the whole undertaking, ultimately depended.

Another dispatch which followed mentioned to Bentinck the difficulties encountered by M. d'Amerongen in concluding the treaty with Saxony, who though friendly declined at this moment to enter into a formal arrangement ; [1] while the Duke of Hanover, still clinging to a treaty he had made with France in the autumn of the previous year, would only give an assurance that he would undertake nothing disadvantageous to the Prince or the Republic.

With regard to the question of the election of Cardinal Fürstenberg which begins the foregoing letter, this was, as Burnet says, " a good blind " for " covering all the preparations of the Prince of Orange." Maximilian Henry, Elector and Archbishop of Cologne, held also the important bishoprics of Liège, Münster and Hildesheim. He belonged to the Bavarian Ducal House, occupied a very strong position, and could put a considerable force into the field. His dominions were adjacent to the Netherlands and Cologne commanded an important reach of the Rhine. But, old and senile, he was preoccupied with a search for the Philosopher's Stone, and was greatly under the domination of Cardinal Fürstenberg, his coadjutor in the Archbishopric, the nominee of France, who expected to succeed him. Maximilian had supported the French cause in Germany. The election of Fürstenberg as his successor would secure the preponderance of French influence in the north-west of the Empire. The candidate of Louis XIV. received the majority of votes at the election, but the Emperor determined, with the agreement of the Pope, to maintain the rival candidate, Prince Joseph Clement, a boy of seventeen, brother to the reigning Elector of Bavaria. Louis XIV. sent French troops to occupy Cologne. A glance at the map will show how serious a menace this was to the Dutch Republic and explains the grave view William took of the situation.

In July (after Bentinck had returned home to Holland) the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, Brandenburg's brother-in-law, who had also been asked for troops, visited Berlin, and there learnt from the Elector their destination. The two Princes discussed and concluded a territorial defensive alliance. They agreed that the whole Rhine was endangered by Louis XIV.'s aggressive policy, and that it was especially

[1] Klopp, vii. 68, on the authority of Puffendorf.

important to protect Cologne, Coblenz and the United Netherlands, and to defend the Protestant Religion, which was menaced by France and England.

During Bentinck's absence the disquiet which he had felt at the illness of his wife had been aggravated by the tidings which the Prince, however much he tried to reassure his friend, had sent of her amid the diplomatic instructions of his correspondence. Added to this anxiety was the news of the death of his eldest son and second child Willem, an ailing boy of six. The Prince, in breaking the news to him, wrote :

" Although I think you had hardly counted on the life of poor ' Willemtie ' that will not prevent its causing you much grief to learn that he died last night. I assure you that it has sensibly touched me. I do not doubt that you will submit to the will of God as a good Christian should. I pray God to preserve you and your family long years from such misfortunes."

The loss could not but have affected poor Madame Bentinck, about whose health the Prince's letters to Bentinck were alternately reassuring and despondent. In June he wrote to convey Dr. Hutten's opinion that she could be cured of her fever ; but this letter was immediately followed by another in which he urged Bentinck's return as soon as possible, for Madame Bentinck was in a high fever and extremely weak—but though she was in danger her case was not hopeless. Finally, a few days later, the order to return was rescinded, when the Prince was " delighted to say Madame Bentinck was better and for two days and nights had had no fever."

In his absence the naval and military preparations had been carried on apace. They were viewed by d'Avaux with increasing disquietude and reported by him to Louis XIV., who continued to discount his Ambassador's urgent representations. Amsterdam, for so long the forcing ground of all his intrigues against the Prince of Orange, at last failed him. The burgomasters turned a deaf ear. At last they were touched on their two most sensitive points, fears for their commerce and their religion. During the last year or two a better understanding had gradually come about between the burgomasters and the Prince.[1] The time had

[1] Gebhard's *Life of Witsen ;* and Wagenaar, vol. xv. 422.

come to take these truculent and powerful civic magnates into his confidence and apprise them of his designs. Some cautious and tentative steps were taken in Bentinck's absence. At the beginning of this year Fagel had hinted to Nicholas Witsen, a timorous but honest man, as well as to one or two others, that in his opinion it behoved his Highness to go over to England, if he were invited by the great ones of the Kingdom, and that in such an event it behoved the States to support the Prince. Whereupon a member of the Council whispered to Witsen that "The Prince wanted to play the Monmouth." [1] A little later the Prince himself enlightened Witsen in general terms, strictly charging him to be silent as to the secret with which he had been entrusted.

In June Dykvelt met Witsen at the house of Hudde. He was, he told them, sent by the Prince to represent the danger which threatened the State from abroad, and to ask their counsel, to which they replied that one must rely on Providence to avert the danger. Two days later Dykvelt, who had in the meantime seen Witsen alone, invited him to an interview with the Prince at the Hague. William talked to him long and openly, pointing out to him the importance of not allowing James II. time to strengthen his resistance. Witsen, still timorous, refused to advise the Prince, and asked leave to take counsel with two other burgomasters, Hudde and Geelvinck. After three days he returned to the Hague and had another interview with Dykvelt, at which was present the "Heer van Rhoon," as they called Bentinck, freshly returned from his German mission, who impressed upon him the favourable attitude of the leading English statesmen,[2] to prepare the ground for the Prince. During the next two days the Prince and the burgomaster discussed at length the responsibility to be incurred and the means of meeting it. At last the Prince asked whether, if the expedition to England were undertaken without the States' responsibility, the Council would then lend its support. This was too definite an assurance for the cautious Witsen; after he had once more consulted with his colleagues, he finally informed the Prince that the burgomasters wished to abstain from advice, but if the work was undertaken without it, they would support it in the Council so far as they

[1] "Dat de Prins Monmouthje te Willen speelen."

[2] For letters of leading Englishmen to William, see Dalrymple, ii. appendix.

conscientiously could. With this reply the Prince had to be content.

But at this point arrived some news from England which put a fresh complexion on affairs, and retarded the Prince's preparations. The birth of the Prince of Wales gave a direct heir to the English throne. Suitable rejoicings were undertaken at the Dutch Court. Prayers were ordered by the Princess to be said in her private chapel for her step-brother, and Zuylestein was sent over to offer congratulations from the Prince. It was not long, however, before William learned from him that not one person in ten believed the Prince of Wales to be anything but a supposititious child foisted by James upon the nation to secure his own ends.[1]

There followed on June 30 the trial and acquittal of the Seven Bishops, and the same day the invitation for which William had been waiting was dispatched to him. It was drawn up in cipher calling on the Prince of Orange to bring an army and secure the liberties of the people, and was signed by Devonshire, Shrewsbury, Danby, Lumley, Compton Bishop of London, Admiral Edward Russell and Henry Sidney. It was brought by Admiral Herbert, disguised as a common seaman, who hastened to deliver it to the Prince at Honslaerdyck. At last William had received the mandate for which he had been waiting. The next day was spent in prolonged conferences, at which Bentinck as well as Dykvelt was present. An instant change took place in the attitude of the Court to the celebrations in honour of the birth of the Prince of Wales. Prayers for him were discontinued in the Princess's chapel. At the fête given in his honour by the English Ambassador Albeville, neither the Court nor officials were present. The Ministers of Brandenburg, Celle and Hanover, even, absented themselves; while Mr. Bentinck refused the loan of the trumpeters of his regiment. On July 24 Bentinck hurriedly departed again for Germany, this time to the Courts of Hesse-Cassel, Hanover, Celle and Wolfenbüttel.

Bentinck left Holland on July 24 on his second German mission. It was conducted with the utmost secrecy, though the fact of its taking place was communicated to Louis XIV. by d'Avaux. Fuchs, the Minister of Frederick III., who was entrusted with the conduct of the negotiations, was instructed

[1] Letters of Anne to Mary. Dalrymple.

[2] July 24, 1688. "J'appris que Benting étoit parti cette nuit-là en poste pour aller aux Cours de Hesse-Cassel, d'Hanover, de Zell et de Wolfenbüttel."—D'Avaux, vi. 174.

to repair to Hamburg there to await the return of an express messenger from Bentinck, and then to join him immediately. Fuchs's instructions were very precise. He was, in the first place, to learn from Bentinck what were the actual sentiments of the Prince of Orange and the States towards the present position of affairs in England, and what measures they proposed to take concerning it, so that the Elector might make his own arrangements accordingly. At the same time Fuchs was to assure Bentinck of the friendly sentiments of his master towards the Prince of Orange; that the Elector bore in mind the promise made to William that he would never lose touch with him, and would always do by him and his State what the near relationship, neighbourhood, alliance, and particular affection, which he bore him, might ever demand. As a proof that these were not empty words, Frederick had decided to help Holland in this important affair with as many troops as he could spare at the moment. Fuchs was instructed further to sound Bentinck as to whether the Prince was prepared to contribute to the expenses of recruiting and mobilisation; and to secure subsidies or other advantageous conditions in return for the help it was proposed to give, though he was not to let it appear that the Elector was self-seeking. The second point to be discussed was the important question of detaching Hanover from the French Alliance. Thirdly, Fuchs was to acquaint Bentinck with what had been done about Hesse-Cassel.

Arriving early at six o'clock on a summer morning at Lenzen, Fuchs found the courier, whom Frederick had sent to meet Bentinck, already returned with a letter from the Dutch Ambassador making an appointment at Celle, whereupon Fuchs at once dispatched him again to Bentinck saying that he would be outside Celle on the evening of the next day, a Tuesday, and would immediately apprise him of his arrival. This Fuchs accomplished, although it was harvest time, and he could not take the shortest route for fear of being unable to get horses, and arrived at Celle just before the gates closed. He was afraid of being recognised, and entering the town under the assumed name of Pflug, went to an out-of-the-way inn. Bentinck did not arrive till two hours later. Fuchs at once sent him intelligence of his own arrival, asking if he would prefer to postpone their meeting till the following morning, as prolonged conversation at so late an hour might give rise to suspicion.

Bentinck agreed and deferred his visit to Fuchs till six o'clock the next morning.[1] Bentinck (reports Fuchs) gave a full account of the position of Holland towards England and France. His Electoral Highness, he said, probably knew in part the condition of affairs, but he would have to tell him that the state of that country, as well as that of religion in all places, but especially in the United Netherlands and Germany, was far more dangerous than was commonly understood. There was a complete agreement between the Kings of France and England that James should first overturn religion in that kingdom, introduce Roman Catholicism, and make himself absolute, then master the Netherlands, and finally do the same thing in Germany also.

Such was the zeal which animated both Kings that they had not been afraid to inform the Emperor of their intentions by means of the Jesuits. France had caused an offer to be made to the Emperor that if he would only take a part, or even only let things take their course, Louis would give him Alsace, with all towns on the Rhine, as hereditary possessions (intending to compensate himself by the conquest of the United Netherlands). But though one might have thought the Emperor would have accepted this, out of zeal for Roman Catholicism, he had nevertheless refused the offer, and threatened to make it public. This fact was to be held in the utmost secrecy. The Prince had a special secret correspondent at the Imperial Court, from whom he had learnt it, and if it were known, he would lose this necessary source of information. Bentinck, having now produced the right mental atmosphere, especially by the telling fact about the Emperor, which would sensibly touch Brandenburg, proceeded to the gist of the matter.

In the first place, to delay till the spring would be fatal to their objects, as James would have a Parliament in the coming autumn, which would be devoted to him. Bentinck went on to describe the means by which James would secure a packed Parliament, composed of illegally elected members wholly subservient to his will.

In the second place, James was secretly recruiting in Germany, especially in Westphalia. Recruiting officers

[1] The account of this interview is taken from the report of Fuchs to his master Frederick III. The meeting took place on July 27. The report, the original of which is preserved in the State Archives at Berlin, is addressed to the "Durchlauchtigste Grossmächtigster Churfürst."

at work in this district reported that the men replied all they had to do was to go to England, where the pay and rations were better.

In the third place, France was preparing a great navy for the King of England, which would be ready by next spring, and, finally, if it were not a sufficient reason to avoid delaying till the rope was round one's neck and would be pulled tight, there was the still more important fact that the English and Scottish nations importuned William by day and night to come over. If the Elector would not lend help, Bentinck declared the Prince of Orange would do the best he could for himself, but in that case the downfall of the Prince, the States, and Protestantism itself was unavoidable.

Even if the Prince of Orange did not intervene, England would act without him. If James were successful, the conclusion was obvious ; if the People were victorious, England would become a Republic antagonistic to Holland, whose trade the English would ruin.

From the foregoing most weighty considerations it was *aut nunc aut nunquam*, now or never. Since conscience, honour, duty impelled his Highness, since prudence itself demanded and counselled that it would be better to be beforehand with one's enemy, and not to wait till one received the death stroke from him, since the English nation incessantly urged it with threats, and finally since all this imperatively necessitated it, his Highness was resolved to take up the work in the name of God, and as far as he (Fuchs) could make out to cross over within six weeks and to do what conscience, honour and duty required.

At this point either Bentinck himself recapitulated his arguments categorically or Fuchs did so for the benefit of his master. For : (1) The English and Scottish Nations were unanimous in their wish that the Prince should come over. They offered everything he asked. One offered 6000, another 5000, 4000, 3000 men, and they were prepared to risk all for him. (2) The army and the navy of the King of England were wavering, and could not be relied upon, so universal was the hatred of Roman Catholicism. (3) But even if the army and the fleet were to remain faithful to the King, the Prince would notwithstanding cross over with such a force as would suffice for superiority when the united might of the English nation came in. (4) Thus forty good men-of-war and five frigates were being prepared, which

were more than enough ; for the King had no other resource than in help from France ; but apart from the inextinguishable hatred from the whole nation that such a step would arouse against him—for they detest the French, and call them " French dogs "—France would be unable this year to collect a sufficient force, whereas if one delayed till next year all would be lost.

" Here," says Fuchs, " I interrupted and asked whether the Prince could count upon the States, and especially on Amsterdam, the greatest power in Holland. Bentinck replied with an eager satisfaction that I well remember (mit freudigkeit)—that the Prince had not indeed yet acquainted the States-General with his resolution for fear the affair should become known prematurely and so give the King opportunity to take precautions. He had, however, discussed the business with the most considerable members. I could see," adds Fuchs, " that the Pensionary, Dykvelt and a few others knew about it." With regard to Amsterdam God had marvellously so disposed it that whereas formerly that city had always been opposed to the Prince, it was now at one in impelling and animating him in the resolution he had taken, indeed till now was alone in his confidence.[1] There governed the city, as is known, four burgomasters. One Appelman [2] is quite old and incapable, the three others, Hudde, Witsen and Castrecum,[3] know all and urge the Prince forwards incessantly. But his Highness at first affected an attitude of indifference, and reproached them with their former behaviour and opposition to his well-meant counsels. The affair was a matter of small moment to him now that the birth of the Prince of Wales had excluded the Princess from the succession, but they were so urgent and offered everything that his Highness at last undertook the task as if at their instigation.

The common people in Holland were becoming so violently incited against the English Catholics by their preachers that no one would dare to raise a voice against the expedition. So much money had been offered to that end, especially by individuals, as was incredible. In order

[1] D'Avaux, vi. 175. " Je mandai au Roi que Messieurs d'Amsterdam ne s'opposoient plus si fortement aux desseins de Prince d'Orange, par la prévention ou ils étoient que l'on avoit résolu en France et en Angleterre, de détruire leur Religion, et sûr-tout leur Commerce."

[2] William had forbidden Witsen to confide in him.

[3] Kornelis Geelvink. Heer van Kastrikom.

to keep things quiet, it could not be accepted just yet, but as soon as the time came to let it out one could get more money than one needed. Even the few who already knew about it had empowered the Prince to take over as many troops as he could get, and to that end he had treated with Hesse, and with the Princely House of Lüneburg, and wished to make the same kind of terms with his Electoral Highness. The one thing to be feared was that France, on seeing the Prince go over to England with the fleet and an army, should attack the States in order to create a diversion. In order to guard against this one must bethink oneself of defensive measures in time and be provided with troops. Continuing, Bentinck said he presumed that Fuchs was aware of what had been done with Hesse; the same was about to be done with Brunswick. From Hanover certainly he did not expect to get anything, the Duke was bound to France. They were, however, assured that he would not undertake anything inimical to the States or to the Prince.

Of Celle he was absolutely assured, Bentinck said; the Duke and his ministers, especially von Bernstorf, had the best intentions, and the Duke had told him, himself, how it stood with his brother,[1] and suggested arguments by which Bentinck could combat his brother's sentiments. The Court of Celle looked with disfavour on the Hanoverian-French Alliance and would never enter into it. He would now treat for the handing over of some troops,[2] and hoped to be successful, and to make a better deal than with Hesse-Cassel, notwithstanding that the French Minister had done his utmost to thwart him, for he was spying on Bentinck's movements, and had followed him directly from Hanover to Celle, although he avoided speaking to him. Bentinck went on to say that as for his master, he regarded his Electoral Highness as their greatest asset, because it was, as it were, a common cause, and his Electoral Highness had so great an interest in it in every respect. He then asked Fuchs what his master was prepared to do, and what information he himself had to give on the subject. Whereupon Fuchs answered that his master would do everything for the Prince that the affection and love he bore his Highness, as well as his own conscience and interest, required; and that he was eager to start and to stake [3] everything immediately with his Highness.

[1] Hanover. [2] From Celle evidently. [3] Zuheben und zulegen.

Fuchs then explained the offers that he had been instructed to make, and so represented Brandenburg's attitude to the Prince that Bentinck could understand his sincere intentions, and his disinterestedness, as he did not wish to extract a groat's worth of advantage out of it. ("Which fitted in particularly well," remarks Fuchs, "with those articles in which your Electoral Highness asked for forage for your militia, and some subsidies for new recruits and recruiting.") With regard to these Fuchs pointed out that his Electoral Highness would be compelled to replace immediately as many troops as he meant to cede to the States, in order to have his militia complete, and to be ready for any eventualities. This would be impossible if Brandenburg had to feed his own new recruits as well as those troops ceded to Holland, and at the same time it would be impossible to raise funds for the new recruits unless the States or the Prince of Orange would supply it. The Electoral Prince's late Herr Father had not left any ready money, the country was exhausted, and the Elector, particularly as he had only just begun to rule, was not able to add further burdens to the country. If such were not the case, Fuchs declared, his Electoral Highness would count himself only too happy if he could prove his devotion to the Prince in this respect also without making any demand.

The Herr von Benting, Fuchs assured his master, took all this very well, and expressed his opinion that the Elector of Brandenburg was making no unfair demands. Maintenance according to the scale of Dutch regiments he at once conceded, only asking that the cession should not be limited to one year, as Cassel had done, but left as long as the States required them. Fuchs replied that there would be no difficulty on that point. With regard to recruiting money, Bentinck said, of his own accord, that it would be best if the Elector made such a treaty as had been made with Hesse-Cassel, and that at once, and that certain travelling expenses and recruiting money should be offered. He proposed at the same time to draw up a scheme and send it in, only laying stress on two points with regard to it: (1) Four thousand troops was too small a number, at least six thousand should be sent, five thousand infantry and the rest cavalry and dragoons; he also urged that a good number of troops should be sent to Cleves, the sooner the better. (2) Bentinck asked at what rate travelling and

recruiting money would be required, for the special terms the Prince had offered to Hesse-Cassel in order to make sure of the Landgrave could not possibly be conceded elsewhere. He hoped he would not have to give more to Celle than eight or ten reichsthaler for an infantryman, and twenty-five reichsthaler for a mounted man. Fuchs had no instructions on this point, but he assured Bentinck over again that the Elector of Brandenburg, out of the love he bore the Prince of Orange, had no desire to make a grote's worth of profit, it was only that as he had no recruiting money of his own and could not force it out of his country, it followed as a matter of course that at least the wherewithal must be supplied to enable him to raise the troops. The terms proposed by Bentinck were, however, wholly impossible, men were not to be got at those rates. It was easy to see why Celle did it, for they were getting not only maintenance, but travelling expenses, without their having to recruit a man outside the place in which he would have to remain. Hanover had made himself secure by the alliance with France. Brandenburg, on the other hand, having embraced the cause of William and the States, did not know what he might have to be prepared for from France, but must be on his guard, and straightway recruit as many men as he had ceded. Fuchs proposed that the terms should be twelve reichsthaler for an infantryman, and forty for a cavalryman, though he added that these proposals were made by himself, without instructions, and were not binding, but he knew that his master could not do it for less, and would be a loser by it otherwise. The Elector would, however, cede his troops for one-third less than Hesse-Cassel, out of consideration for the Prince.

Bentinck evidently thought his Electoral Highness was driving a very hard bargain. "For indeed," says Fuchs, "he combated this proposal for a long time, but said he would think it over. It is my most humble duty," he concludes, "to mention two points with regard to this conversation," and the astute Ambassador pointed out to Frederick III. that it was much more profitable for him to make such a treaty as had been offered than if he, Fuchs, had adhered strictly to his instructions. For if the States had demanded Brandenburg's aid as an ally, he would have had to give it, and would have received neither maintenance nor travelling money, whereas now he would

receive both and could at once replace his troops. Of course Brandenburg might have objected that this would not be a defensive war, but, "what can be had with good will is the best after all." In the second place, Fuchs perceived clearly that his Electoral Highness would get these higher terms if he insisted, and it was indeed scarcely possible to do the recruiting for much less.

Bentinck undertook to draw up a scheme and send it by a courier; before leaving he earnestly desired Fuchs to speak privately with the Minister of Celle, von Bernstorf; he was fully assured of him, and knew for certain that he would not betray them. Fuchs, though with some reluctance, consented, partly because of Bentinck's insistence and partly because he reflected that he had to make a long journey, and his being recognised would give umbrage, especially as he was travelling under an assumed name. The Minister was most favourably disposed and wholly accessible to their arguments that if Roman Catholicism were established in England, Holland would be the next victim; and Germany would only find such favour as was accorded to Ulysses by Polyphemus, that of being devoured last. They learnt from Bernstorf that his master had distrusted throughout the French Alliance of Hanover, and was fully alive to the danger which already threatened Protestantism from the Fürstenberg election. The first essential was to secure Cologne and Coblenz against France, and the second to put Hamburg and Lübeck in a position of security against Denmark, the ally of France. It was agreed that the Duke should send a trusted messenger to Berlin to come to an understanding with the Elector and the Landgrave of Cassel. Fuchs was much gratified by the interview, which was entirely favourable to his master's interests, as he hastened to assure the Elector, and which had passed off beyond his wishes and expectations.

Finally, Bentinck had been empowered to concede all, and more than all, that Brandenburg had asked with regard to the Prince of Orange's Will, which he promised to draw up in his kinsman's favour before leaving Holland.

His task in Germany successfully completed, Bentinck returned home to his sick wife, and the following letter from the Prince was written after his return home:

"Loo, August 5. I am extremely glad that your wife is a little better. I see from your German letters that it is unnecessary for me to think further of an interview with the Elector. I have answered the memorial of Mr. Herbert on the margin of that you sent me."

Admiral Herbert, after consultation with the Prince's party in England, had drawn up a list of suggestions for measures that should facilitate the success of their scheme. The memoir appears to have been addressed in the first instance to Mr. Bentinck as the person most in the Prince's confidence, and he had forwarded to the Prince extracts of the points which seemed to him most important. William had written rough notes in the margin and returned the paper to Bentinck as he says. It is headed: "Extrait d'un Mémoire que M. Herbert m'a Donné."

(1) It is suggested that Galiotes should be sent to the English coast to gain intelligence. William writes in the margin: "I don't know if he means now, or when we are in a position to execute the affair, and then it would be necessary to know where and to whom to address oneself."

(2) Suggestions for the destination of such Galiotes.

(3) Someone should be sent to England to give and receive advice, and if Mr. D^{t} is not the most suitable person.

(4) To bring from England men who know the northern and western coast.

(5) To encourage officers to come to Holland from England and take service there.

(The Prince of Orange comments in a marginal note that it is impossible to send Dykvelt on any reasonable pretext, unless Sidney's arrival throws more light on the position of affairs.)

(6) There should be a man of tried fidelity in England to look after (ménager) those who, though well disposed, could not resolve to quit their position in the presence of an enemy. (The Prince suggests that Herbert himself will undertake the charge.)

(7) With regard to sending trustworthy information as to the disposition of the army and the fleet; the Prince writes that van Citters can easily do this without rousing suspicion.

Very soon after his return Bentinck was sent by the Prince on a secret visit to Amsterdam to acquaint the burgomasters with the position of affairs. Their meeting took place at Witsen's house, where Bentinck described to them the satisfactory results of his German Mission and that he had got 12,000 men from Brandenburg, Celle, Hesse and Würtemberg.

The burgomasters thanked him for the honour of this report, and politely explained to him that he might very well have spared himself the trouble of coming over there in person—which sounds a trifle ambiguous. Bentinck continued that since the birth of a Prince of Wales, the affair of England no longer concerned the Prince solely but the whole State.

After the interview [1] the "Heer van Rhoon" dined with the two burgomasters; Hudde had excused himself from being present on the ground of indisposition; and they cautiously ventured to drink to the good result of the undertaking. Witsen had taken precautions that the city door should remain open, and the Heer van Rhoon was secretly let out about midnight. Bentinck had also been instructed to see Hiob de Wildt, Secretary to the Admiralty, about setting on foot the equipping of the fleet. When the question was ultimately discussed by the Council of Amsterdam, and Witsen as the presiding burgomaster had to open the discussion, he expressed himself not disinclined to advise support of the undertaking, provided that the amount of aid was determined, that they did not break with England, and stipulated satisfactorily for aid from thence in their turn. On September 16 the Council declared that they were prepared to support his Highness, an unconditional assurance which went further than Witsen had ventured to propose.

Meanwhile Sidney had arrived with the latest intelligence from England. His visit was made with the greatest secrecy in the course of a journey which was ostensibly undertaken to Aix. William wrote immediately to Bentinck to acquaint him with the news:

"Loo, August 27. At last Mr. de Sidney has come here safe and sound, having been a long time at sea, and has passed through Flanders, and as he said he was going to

[1] For details of this meeting, see *Witsen's "Verhaal"* or Wagenaar, xv. 435 *seq.* Heer van Rhoon was Bentinck's Dutch title.

Aix he has come incognito to Appeldorn, whence he has come this evening and has been talking with me up till now. He goes away to-morrow the first thing in the morning to Utrecht and will embark the same night in order to be at Lassum on Sunday morning. This is the place that I have recommended to him since he dare not go to the Hague for fear of being recognised. Thus I could not think of a place in which you would be able to see him more conveniently and with less grounds for suspicion than at Joylingen. It will therefore be necessary that you repair there with Mr. Herbert this Sunday morning."

The Prince gives no further information, referring Bentinck to Sidney himself, adding that what is most urgent is that someone should be sent to England.

On August 29 the Prince wrote again from Loo at great length. He comments on the military preparations being made by France, which he does not believe have anything to do with the Cologne affair of Fürstenberg, as is said. Bentinck will be of the same mind, the Prince adds, when he reads the enclosed letter from Danby,

" which puts me in no little anxiety since he is uncertain whether the affair ought to be undertaken before the winter, or put off till the spring, added to that, the thing begins to become known in all directions, and the small progress that we have made in our necessary preparations. I own that that puts me in terrible anxiety and incertitude, and that I have more than ever need of Divine guidance, not being clear enough what line to take. I beg you to confer thoroughly and at length with M. the Pensionary and M. de Dykvelt together, and read and explain to them the draft of my declaration that M. de Sidney has brought. You see from the conclusion that I throw myself entirely on the mercy of a Parliament, although I much fear that that cannot be otherwise, and yet to put one's fate in their hands is no small risk."

The Prince concludes with expression of sympathy for Madame Bentinck's continued illness : " I am deeply grieved to learn that Madame your wife is no better, assuredly after

yourself nobody is more sensibly touched by it than I am. May God preserve her to you, and give you strength to support whatever may happen."

The Prince enclosed a "Mémoire" concerning the preparations on hand to which he had added comments. They related to :

(1) Certain money payments on behalf of the Duke of Würtemberg. Würtemberg had announced in Council that he was making a "Levée," "which was a gross blunder and will let everything out."

(2) The destinations to which the troops should be sent, and arrangements made for them on their arrival. The Prince notes Nimeguen or Deventer, they "shall be lodged like our own troops," but they were not to be sent till the end of September.

Nimeguen on the extreme east of Holland, overlooking the broad Waal, would at once suggest itself as an obvious halt for troops coming from Germany.

(3) The French Envoy insisted that the Duke of Würtemberg should disband his troops. It is suggested that the Prince should obtain the authority of Brandenburg for raising the levée in his name.

(4) This levée might be made without France's taking violent measures against the Duke, or making use of Brandenburg's name, if his Highness under pretext of this levée would raise the recruits. M. le Duc offers to give facilities for this without appearing interested in it, but if so it will be necessary to agree to the same terms already concluded with the said Duke, and to pay out some money before the whole business is concluded. William notes his approval of this suggestion in the margin.

During these hurried and anxious days Bentinck remained with his invalid wife. The Prince writes again from Loo on August 31 :

"I am absolutely convinced by the reasons that the Pensionary gives me for undertaking the grand affair at once. M. de Wilde must be made to make all haste with the crews ; it is that which I most fear will delay us. Nothing is yet decided as to who is to go into England, which becomes more and more urgent."

The Prince, who in an earlier letter had stated that he

thought it unnecessary to confer personally with Frederick III., now decided to meet him, and wrote to Bentinck on September 2 from Loo to say that he must go to Minden immediately. He is concerned on Bentinck's account, and forbids him to come too if his wife's health makes it unlikely that he will see her again. Bentinck accepted the permission and remained with his wife, as appears from another letter written by the Prince on September 4 from Loo. After expressing his great regret that he could not have Bentinck on the journey, and the cause, William goes on to say he will remain two days at Minden, and directs Bentinck to tell the Pensionary to notify to the States that he is leaving the country. He apologises for not writing directly to the Pensionary, but this letter will do for him too. Dykvelt, the Prince continues, should see M. Hudde to concert the affair, for I am always apprehensive about that great city. He is very anxious about the preparations that France is making. She is forming a good army corps in the Archbishopric of Cologne, and another on the Meuse.

Continuing, the Prince confesses that he does not see how the German Princes can give the promised troops. He believes Cardinal Fürstenberg's candidature there is only a pretext; the real French object is to hinder the design, though they do not wish to divulge it. This is confirmed by a letter that the Princess has had by the last post from the King [James II.] saying there is no news to send, but he expects it from here because of the great navy that the States are making.

The preparations and negotiations that the Prince of Orange believed himself to be making with such secrecy were for the most part faithfully made known to Louis XIV. by d'Avaux. In a dispatch of September 14 the Ambassador forwards a list of the German troops engaged by Holland [1]:—

"The Elector of Brandenburg will furnish 12,000 men; 6000, that is, which he is obliged to give by virtue of his treaties, and an additional 6000; the Elector of Saxony 6000, the Dukes of Celle and Wolfenbüttel 4000, Hesse-Cassel 3000. I have learned nothing about those that

[1] D'Avaux, vi. 134 *seq.*

are being raised at Würtemberg. The Prince has given a certain sum for these troops and has engaged to keep them during a certain time."

D'Avaux thinks it is six months. He had no doubt at all of the designs of the Prince and had written on August 10 that he wished to have an army corps on the Rhine while he acted in England. He had also informed Barillon in London of all that he had written to Louis, "car il m'a sembloit qu'on s'endormiroit en Angleterre." He knew that at the end of the month van Citters, the Ambassador, had already brought into Holland "cent mille guineas," subscribed by English Protestants for the Prince's expedition.[1] The Prince's naval and military preparations were continually described in detail in d'Avaux's dispatches, and the embarkation of cannon from the arsenal at Delft and elsewhere, even down to the saddles and bridles for the cavalry. He knew that Schomberg was to hold command under the Prince, even William's visit to Minden was apprehended even before he started, as well as its object.[2]

Yet Louis XIV. continued to turn a deaf ear, and to discount all that d'Avaux had to say.[3] He listened in preference to his Ambassador at James II.'s Court, Barillon, who was successfully hoodwinked by Sunderland and his English advisers. Convinced at last, Louis XIV. instructed d'Avaux to inform the States-General that any act of hostility against England would be regarded as a declaration of war on France.[4] Bonrepos was sent to London with an offer of naval assistance, which was not accepted. James treated the friendly intervention of Louis XIV. as an act of patronising interference. Van Citters was well received by him, and he publicly expressed his disbelief in the rumours of a Dutch invasion.

The Prince returned from Minden and arrived in Loo at midnight on September 14. His first act was to write to express his sympathy with Bentinck on his wife's continued illness, and his grief at hearing of it. "May God give you strength and enable you to continue to work for

[1] D'Avaux, vi. 198.

[2] *Ibid.*, vi. 213, September 3. "Je fus averti le même soir, que le Prince devoit partir le lendemain à sept heures du matin pour aller s'aboucher en Minden avec l'Electeur de Brandenbourg."

[3] "He apprised the King of it but was laughed at," says St. Simon.

[4] D'Avaux and Dalrymple, ii. appendix, 164.

WILLIAM BENTINCK.

From the painting by Simon du Bois at Middachten, in the possession of Count Bentinck.

ANNE VILLIERS.

From a painting at Welbeck Abbey, in the possession of his Grace the Duke of Portland.

a cause on which depends humanly speaking the good of his church." The Prince expresses himself

"extremely fearful of the timidity of some of the Amsterdam people, and the ill-will of others, for if this business is not done with vigour and resolution we cannot expect good success. If the navy is not ready soon all is spoiled, it is absolutely essential to give more to the sailors if this is necessary."

Preparations continued with redoubled activity. A letter written to Bentinck on September 26 from Dieren shows the master mind grasping all the details of the organisation, and mustering every possible resource, down to a few dozen draft horses in Zealand or Flanders, or thirty or forty remounts which were to be provided for the refugee officers with the troops. He is still most anxious about the fleet, on which everything depended. It is very important not to risk an engagement. He has told Herbert so, but Bentinck must impress this thoroughly on him. He is embarking two regiments of infantry for the fleet at Nimeguen if the wind is favourable, but if they had to remain in the Meuse, this would utterly reveal the design. The Prince adds: "I forgot to say there are only one hundred bombs each ready charged for our great mortars and hauwitzers which is almost nothing."

On September 27 came the news that Louis XIV.'s armies were marching against Philippsburg and the towns of the Palatinate. This set at rest any anxiety about the frontiers of the United Provinces. "Never has news more rejoiced the Prince of Orange," [1] wrote d'Avaux, "for he feared that they would come into Flanders, or from the side of Cologne." Well might William rejoice. This unexpected onslaught by France not only left the path clear to England, but brought in the wavering German Princes. The Elector of Saxony immediately mobilised his forces to aid in the defence of the middle Rhine and the Duke of Hanover adhered to his promise that he would defend the Empire in case of attack by France. Finally the Emperor, informed of the schemes of the Prince of Orange, received the news favourably, reassured by the great moderation expressed by him towards the Roman Catholic religion.

[1] D'Avaux, vi. 268.

To the onlookers who were in the secret the rapidity with which the Prince's preparations were completed was astonishing. "We were amazed at the dispatch." Bentinck, Dykvelt and Herbert were for two months constantly at the Hague "giving all necessary orders with so little noise that nothing broke out all that while." Even here circumstances seemed to work in the Prince's favour.

"Bentinck used to be constantly with the Prince, being the person that was most entirely trusted: so that his absence, being so constantly employed by him, might have given some umbrage. But all the summer his lady was so very ill that she was looked on every day as one that could not live three days to an end: so that this was a very just excuse for his attendance at the Hague." [1]

D'Avaux continued to send details of the Prince's preparations.[2] He observed that a number of the flat-bottomed boats used for bringing oxen from Holstein had been hired for the embarkation of cavalry, as he guessed from the sand and planks and portable bridges which had been prepared. All the saddles and biscuits were now ready. Before leaving the camp at Nimeguen the Prince distributed his forces. Some troops marched north and embarked at Kampen on the Zuyder Zee, to sail thence towards the Texel; others descended the Meuse, some going to Rotterdam, some to Brill, others to Zealand. The embarkations took place simultaneously with great rapidity, and in perfect order. On September 29 William wrote that he hoped to be at the Hague in a few hours. He sent Bentinck signed "the letter in English which was to be printed and sealed with the new seal." The letter was addressed: "To the Commanders of Ships and all seamen, who are now with the English fleet." The Prince assured them he had no other design than the good of England and the preservation of the Protestant religion, and called for their co-operation.

He was delayed a short time by an attack of illness, so that the Princess was the first to arrive at the Hague. She went everywhere with a great affectation of gaiety, which scandalised d'Avaux.

[1] Burnet. [2] D'Avaux, vi. 268 *seq.*

"There are divers pleasant cities on the Rhine and Meuse between Nimeguen and the Brill," wrote a contemporary diarist, and here to the landing stages crowded the friends and relations of the soldiers, the burghers and their families, some weeping and praying, to bid them God speed, while the soldiers on board made a brave show and played on their hoeboys, Dutch flutes and other instruments, others beating their drums and sounding their trumpets.[1]

The detachments of troops sailed from the river towns, but it was weeks before the expedition could sail. It was now delayed by persistent gales from the west, and the eager question each morning was, "Sir, I pray you how is the wind to-day?" During these days, while William waited for the assembling of the fleet, English volunteers arrived daily to offer their services to the Prince and brought with them large sums of money in support of the enterprise. Even Amsterdam had laid aside all opposition. Louis XIV.'s embargo on Dutch herrings had united all classes in Holland against France.[2]

In the midst of his preparations he had not forgotten the interests of his friend, William Bentinck. The undertaking on which he was embarking was a perilous one, from which he might never return. With his own hand the Prince wrote a bequest of land which should provide for his faithful servant in case all was lost. It is dated October 16 at the Hague and bequeaths to "Willem Bentinck, Heer van Rhoon onse Camerheer [Chamberlain], the 'Graefschap' of Leerdan, and barony of Acquoy, with the Lordship and barony of Yselsteyn with dependencies, free from all dues."[3]

On October 16, the very day on which the Prince had written the bequest to Bentinck, the west wind suddenly changed to the east, "the Protestant wind," those waiting and watching anxiously from the other side of the Channel called it. Orders were hastily sent to the Port of Helvoetsluys and the Prince went to take leave of the States-General.

[1] Whittel's *Exact Diary*. He was English Chaplain to the Army.

[2] D'Avaux, vi. One of the principal burgomasters assured an emissary of d'Avaux's "That they will be carried along in spite of themselves by the torrent." Feeling in Holland runs so high they are blamed for the dangers which threaten the Republic, and are asked if they wish to come to an undertsanding with the enemy and to see their religion annihilated and their commerce destroyed, "which, however," adds d'Avaux cynically but with some truth, "is much nearer to their hearts than their religion."

[3] Egerton MSS. 1708, f. 7.

He thanked them for the care they had taken of him from his childhood and for the many marks he had received of their affection, and assuring them of the warmth of his own, he earnestly warned them against disunion in the face of a watchful enemy. Finally he commended the Princess to their care, and so took leave.[1]

In replying the deputies "all melted into tears and passion, so that their speeches were much broken, very short and extremely tender." Only the Prince himself "continued firm in his usual gravity and phlegm." A still further delay was caused by the transport fleet having consumed so much of their provisions that those days of the good wind were lost in revictualling. More than six hundred ships could be counted from the shores of Scheveningen.[2] By nine o'clock on Saturday night, October 19, the whole fleet was at sea. The Prince himself was the last to follow at four o'clock in the afternoon. He was accompanied by Bentinck, Zuylestein, de Solmes, Ouwerkerk and Shrewsbury. They sailed down to Maesland Sluys in a very rich yacht. Mary and her ladies accompanied them on another yacht. The Princess returned after a tearful parting. The Prince was on a quick-sailing vessel, and intended to overtake the fleet and give them their sailing orders. Twice the boat ran ashore on a sandbank and was only got off with danger and difficulty; when they got free, with much loss of time, night had already fallen, and a violent storm breaking from the south-west [3] "we wrought against it all that night and the next day." The danger to so vast a fleet was very great. On the 21st the signal was given to return to port, and though it seemed at first as if many ships had been lost, yet all came safely again to shore, with the loss of only one man who was blown from the shrouds and drowned. The poor horses fared worse, five hundred of them died from want of air. The sufferings of the men on board cannot be lightly imagined when it is remembered that they were obliged to remain in the dark, as no light might be carried below ships for fear of an explosion, and the sickness and resulting confusion were rendered far worse. Added

[1] This account is taken from d'Avaux, vi. 306, who omits the tears shed by the Prince's audience. See also Burnet and Wagenaar, xv. 474, who gives a slightly different account.

[2] "Le Prince d'Orange a plus de six cent voiles."—D'Avaux, November 1.

[3] So Krampricht (Klopp, iv.). Burnet says north-west, which is more probable.

to that the perils of collision of so vast a fleet were very great, the long night, says one who was present, was passed in sickness and groans. The enemies of the Prince saw in this the act of God, and believed that the winds and the waves had fought in their favour and ruined the whole design. His friends averred that Providence had intervened to save the lives of so many in so great danger. The Prince, with his usual sang-froid, encouraged the reports of the destruction of his fleet in order to lull the fears of his enemies. The damage was soon repaired. William remained with the fleet to maintain the courage of his men.

The following letter from William Bentinck to Admiral Herbert expresses the anxiety and uncertainty of those already on shore in the absence of news.

"The Hague, 21 Oct.

" Monsieur :

" After we have been all these past days in the most extreme anxiety on your behalf, his Highness has just received this morning the news by a letter from M. Evertsen [1] that thank God all is still well with the fleet. . . . His Highness is sending orders by this express that the fleet should put into Goeree.[2] On arrival there, Monsieur, you will find an order from his Highness written yesterday in which he tells you as soon as the fleet has come in to consult about the execution of the design. I do not doubt that you have news by your galliotes of the movements of the English fleet. I beg you, when you leave to come here, to injoin on M. Evertsen to send every day to reconnoitre in what condition and position they are. I assure you that I am persuaded in your whole life there have not been formed so many wishes for your preservation as during these horrible tempests there have been here, and particularly by him, who is and always will be, Monsieur,

" Your very humble and very obedient servant,

" W. Bentinck."

[1] Lieutenant-Admiral Kornelis Evertsen; he was second in command under Admiral Herbert.

[2] There is extant an order of the same date, November 1 (N.S.), written from Helvoetsluys by William Bentinck, sending orders for the fleet to come into Goeree so as to be less incommoded by transports at anchor at Helvoetsluys to be refitted with " vivres " after the storm. The cavalry have greatly suffered, " beaucoup de chevaux morts."

(Postscript.) "The news from England reports that the King has discharged the Ecclesiastical Commission, that he has discontinued the suspension of the Bishop of London, and that he has restored the old Charter to that city. Adieu. I hope to-morrow to have the satisfaction of seeing you."

Meanwhile the Princess at the Hague ordered prayers four times a day, and assisted at them with great devotion. Still the westerly gale continued. It was already so late in the season that every delay was dangerous, at any moment the river might freeze and hold up the expedition all the winter long. On October 27, so heavy a storm arose that it was again feared that the best part of the fleet which was already riding at sea would be lost. The timorous lost heart and "showed an agony of fear." The Prince alone remained calm.

During these last days of public uncertainty and anxiety, William Bentinck was preoccupied by his own personal distress. His wife still hung between life and death, his departure on so hazardous an adventure could not but be prejudicial to her recovery. His tender concern for her is expressed in the following three letters, written on the last three days before he sailed.

"Helvoetsluys, October 27.

"I have at this moment received a letter from my sister of yesterday evening at seven o'clock in which she tells me that you have not very high fever. The Good God be praised for it, who will of His mercy restore your health to my great content. We arrived here yesterday evening at sundown. I do not believe that we can be ready to set sail till to-morrow, all our vessels that should come from Rotterdam and the Texel not yet being assembled. Adieu. I beg you to believe that I shall love you all my life with the same devotion."

On the following day Bentinck wrote again.

"Helvoetsluys, October 28.

"I am anxious at not having received any news of you, although his Highness has received some from Madame la Princesse. The wind is contrary, and prevents our going

out. I hope that the Good God will send us a good one, so that we have a fortunate passage. I hope that I shall have news of you to-morrow. Adieu. I wish you good night, and am always yours.

"All the vessels from the Texel have arrived this evening in Goeree, so that all is ready for starting together."

William Bentinck's last thoughts before sailing were with the wife he was never to see again.

"On board the *Brille* at anchor in the mouth of the Meuse.
"This 30th Oct., 1688, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

"For two days I have received no news from you, which gives me some anxiety, the more so that it does not appear that we shall receive any soon. We put to sea yesterday like all the rest of our fleet, but we missed the tide, so that we are obliged to stay here for the night. We shall weigh anchor when the tide rises, and gives us enough water to cross the Bank which is at the mouth of this river. That done, we may hope for a good passage, the wind being strong enough under the Holy Protection of God. The news that we have received to-day from England is very good. I hope that the news we shall have of one another will be good. May God preserve you and restore your health to the joy of him who will always love you unalterably.

"My service to my sisters and tell them to keep themselves well informed of every time that her Royal Highness writes." [1]

At last the longed-for Protestant wind blew once more. The fleet sailed on November 1 (O.S.) with the evening tide. The strong wind kept the English fleet from coming out; the Channel was clear on the 3rd, the Isle of Wight was reached November 4. The Prince's birthday and wedding-day seemed to him an auspicious date, but Torbay had been decided on for the landing-place, as affording the safest anchorage for so large a fleet, and here on November 5 the landing was made so successfully that in three hours all the horses were got ashore.

[1] Egerton MSS. 1705.

CHAPTER VI.—1688–1690

THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION—BENTINCK IN HOLLAND FOR THE AFFAIR OF THE SHERIFFS

The west of England had been chosen as a landing-place in preference to the north, where the Prince's supporters had mustered, because it was easier of access for so great a fleet and afforded safer harbours, and because the West Country that had so grievously suffered from James's reprisals after Monmouth's rebellion was expected to rally to the Prince as to a deliverer. But the disadvantages of the choice became at once apparent. William had been expected in the north, and his supporters were not therefore ready to receive him in the neighbourhood of Torbay. Moreover, the country gentlemen of the neighbourhood, with the "Bloody Assizes" fresh in their memories, did not immediately hasten to join his standard. Apart from its natural facilities, Torbay was a most desolate spot, almost destitute of any accommodation or convenience. No welcoming crowds, no men of influence were there ready to lay their swords and their lives at the feet of the deliverer. The Prince found only the small village of Brixham, consisting of a few miserable houses, built of the stone of the neighbourhood and covered with slate. It lay towards a high hill, against which the houses stood as if for shelter from the winds. William lost no time in riding out to survey the surrounding country. His secretary, Huygens, found him on the hill with "Benting and Zuylestein sitting on very bad horses" that had been hastily provided by the villagers. Here the night was passed. The Crowned Rose Tavern afforded some accommodation to the Prince's followers. Lord Cutts, among others, got a room there, agreeing to let Huygens sleep on a mattress on the floor. A crowd of soldiers and country people were drinking cider. Never had the miserable hostelry had such custom. Huygens

shared Lord Cutts's dinner of a "fricassee of very tough sheep's flesh." [1]

The Prince passed the night in a fisherman's hut. The calm weather that had facilitated the landing had given way to a heavy westerly gale. It added to the discomfort, but it drove back the pursuing English fleet under the command of Dartmouth and forced it to take refuge in Portsmouth Harbour. "This strange ordering of the winds and seasons," wrote Burnet, "just to change as our affairs required it, could not but make deep impressions on me, as well as on all that observed it."

Miraculously auspicious as all the circumstances of the Prince's landing had been, it was followed by a period of disappointing inaction. The march for Exeter began next day in continuous heavy rain, the Prince riding with his infantry. That night the soldiers' tents were soaked through, and in the early dusk of the November evening and the confusion of the march through unknown country, some of the men, and among them the servants of the Prince and Bentinck, had to camp under hedges with little to eat. "The soldiers stumbled and fell because of a dimness in their heads, they had been so long tossed at sea." To these aliens marching laboriously over the deep-rutted West Country roads England seemed a strange wild country: "a country of great and high hills and deep valleys with quantities of hedges, the roads wonderfully bad, all of stone, and covered with loose stones very dirty and muddy."

Along the roads the country people, men, women and children, flocked to welcome the Prince, calling "God bless you, and a hundred good wishes." They brought such humble offerings as they had, and pressed apples into the hands of the Prince's followers. One old woman stood with a flask and would not be denied till she had presented it to his Highness. "In one place stood five women greeting him, each with a pipe of tobacco in her mouth, we saw a great many such, smoking without shame, also quite young ones 13 and 14 years old."

Exeter was reached on November 9. An advance guard of troops had arrived there the day before. With them was Burnet, charged by the Prince to look to the protection of the cathedral clergy. They, for their part, did not wait

[1] See Huygens and Oldmixon.

to be protected. The Bishop and the Dean took flight. The Mayor indeed opened the gates of the city at the word of command, but he "played the devil," [1] and said to Bentinck in the presence of several others that he would not serve on any new commission if it were offered him, but would remain faithful to his master. If the dignitaries of the city held timorously aloof, the townspeople made up for it in the warmth of their reception. The Prince made a formal entry into the city, "a splendid entry which was mightily magnified at London." [2] Crowds lined the muddy country roads to see the troops pass. The foot-soldiers were limping, sorely weather-beaten, much dabbled with marching in the dirt and rain, and pale and thin,[3] but the bespattered men and horses made a gallant show in the eyes of the throngs of people. The Prince's army had been drawn from many sources. It was headed by two hundred gentlemen in armour, English for the most part, and mounted on the heavy Flemish horses of the kind that to-day carries the equestrian figure of William of Orange in St. James's Square. Each man was strangely attended by a turbaned and befeathered negro from the sugar plantations of Dutch Guiana. They were followed by a troop of Swedish cavalry in black armour heavily furred (Oldmixon calls them Finland Guards clothed in bear skins). The Prince's banner followed, bearing the words, "The Protestant Religion and the liberties of England." [4] It was surrounded by a number of his adherents. With it rode the Prince in full armour on his white horse. Forty of his servants ran on foot beside him. He was accompanied by Schomberg. The famous Swiss infantry followed, bewhiskered veterans of many fields. Last rode a number of the Prince's adherents, Bentinck, Solmes and Ginkel, and their men. Windows and roofs were crowded, houses were decorated. The Prince was lodged at the Deanery, which had been made ready for his reception in the absence of the Dean. The upper clergy continued to hold aloof, and did not dare to officiate at the cathedral at the Solemn Service of thanksgiving for the Prince's safe arrival. Burnet read aloud the Prince's Declaration, crying at the close, "God save

[1] "De beest speelde," so Huygens. [2] Oldmixon. [3] Whittel.
[4] D'Avaux had sent a faithful account of the banners that were prepared for the expedition to France, vi. 310. Below the arms of the Prince and Princess were the words, "Je maintiendrai."

the Prince of Orange," to which the congregation cried, "Amen."

It was not surprising that the clergy should have hesitated to take a bold line when the men of position in the neighbourhood feared to commit themselves. When the Prince's supporters learned of his landing in the west they hastened to join his standard as fast as armed men could travel on horseback over bad roads. But the news of the arrival had scarcely reached them, and meanwhile the Prince was indignant at the incomprehensible delay in making good their protestations, and even considered the advisability of returning to Holland and abandoning his purpose. It was not till the end of a week that the local country gentlemen began to join the Prince. They were quickly followed by leading men from all parts of the country. One of the earliest to arrive was the young Lord Cornbury; he had neither character nor intelligence, and was merely a tool in the hands of the arch-traitor Churchill, but as the eldest son of the Earl of Clarendon, himself a coward and a time-server, brother-in-law to James II. and uncle to the Princess of Orange, his advent was a straw to show which way the wind was blowing, and was the first of many desertions. He joined the Prince's forces at Honiton on November 14. Two days earlier Mr. Bentinck had written to Admiral Herbert to tell him how their common cause was prospering:

"Exeter, 12 (22) November.[1]

"Monsieur,

"I beg that you will neither tax me with idleness nor negligence for not having written to you. . . . You will find, besides the enclosed orders from his Highness, a letter from Mr. Russell, which will give you satisfaction. We have much in learning the position of affairs from my Lord Colchester, Mr. Warton, Colonel Godfrey and several others who are come from the army of the King. I doubt not that the Good God will bless the cause, the people appear everywhere here extremely well disposed, it is only the gentlemen and the clergy who are somewhat more cautious, and do not espouse our cause. I am surprised at the latter, it seems to me that fear of the gibbet has more effect on their minds than zeal

[1] Add. MSS. 2621.

for religion. May the Good God give you good success in the execution of the orders that his Highness sends you herewith. I beg you to be assured that I am, Monsieur,

"Your very humble and very obedient servant,

"G. Bentinck."

There was much anxiety as to what Lord Bath, Governor of Plymouth, would do. He had previously sent assurances to the Prince that he would support him, but hitherto he had not declared himself. The adhesion of so important a seaport as Plymouth to the cause, as well as that of an influential country magnate like Lord Bath, meant additional security for the fleet and left the country in the Prince's rear safe whenever he marched towards London. Russell was sent to Plymouth on November 16 to interview Bath, as both the Prince and Bentinck wrote to inform Admiral Herbert, who had remained with the fleet, the Prince very shortly, and Mr. Bentinck, who at this time was on very friendly terms with Herbert, at great length :

"Exeter, 17 (27).

"I do not know where you will find the English fleet, but we are told that it is in the River, and that my Lord Dartmouth is gone to find the King. Thank God our affairs look very well. I believe that we shall march next Tuesday, we have much difficulty in finding a means of transporting our cannon and ammunition from here. I hope, please God, that you will soon have a good place of retreat. However, you will be able to come back safely here into this river. His Highness will leave here a garrison with its magazine and everything necessary, provisions, munitions and artillery, and we have not a better place. I believe he will have the towers or castles of Dartmouth fortified to some extent, and put a garrison there. God grant that you may return to us after a good success. I beg that you will look after the safety of our letters, with which the bearer is entrusted. We are told that our first letters were taken by a Dunquerque (boat). Mr. Russell is gone to Plymouth, his brother is arrived here. His Highness is going this morning ten miles off to see the regiment of the Duke of St. Albans, and a part of the regiment of my Lord Cornbury. I believe his Highness will still write

to you, if it is possible, this time. It will be absolutely necessary to keep eight or nine frigates in the Canal, but for the whole fleet, on the other hand, it will be necessary for it to go back, returning to Holland. I will write to-day for them to send provisions for the frigates, but for the whole fleet it will be extremely difficult, and will have a bad effect in the country, because it will give rise to the belief that his Highness wishes to keep the fleet all the winter at sea."

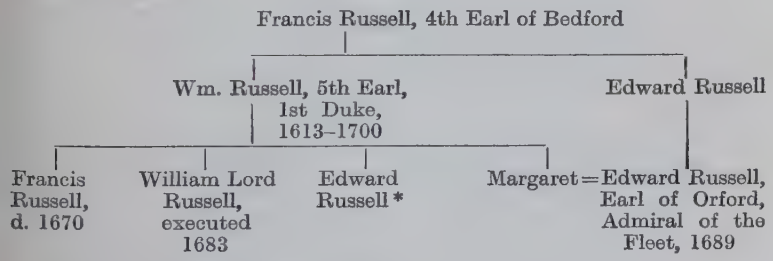
On November 21 (December 1) Bentinck wrote again to Herbert on hearing from him that the English fleet had been sighted :

" Our ardent prayers and our wishes are all the assistance that we can give you. I do not doubt that the Good God will bless the good cause, and that we shall soon have the joy of learning of the fortunate result of the affair."

He adds that they would already have heard of an engagement if there had been one, and suggests that the English fleet may have had the design of passing on to give help to Plymouth, which was expected to be on the point of surrendering, as Mr. Russell [1] had gone there to make terms with Lord Bath and give a commission to guard the city and raise the Cornish militia in the Prince's name.

The aspect of affairs in the Prince's camp had now entirely changed.

[1] The Russells.


Francis Russell, 4th Earl of Bedford
Wm. Russell, 5th Earl, 1st Duke, 1613–1700
Edward Russell
Francis Russell, d. 1670
William Lord Russell, executed 1683
Edward Russell *
Margaret = Edward Russell, Earl of Orford, Admiral of the Fleet, 1689

Burnet, Harl. MSS. 6584, ff. 276–278.

" Every day some came to him from London, the first were the Lord Colchester, Mr. Edward Russell," * etc., elsewhere specifically mentioned as " The Lord Russell's brother."

Admiral Russell had come to Holland September 1688, and Burnet says, " On the 4th Russell came aboard us with the best of all the English Pilates they had brought over," Burnet being " in the ship with the Prince's other domestics that went in the van of the whole fleet."

"The local gentlemen come to us in great numbers almost without exception; and all the men of influence. They have all signed an Act of Association by which they oblige themselves to aid his Highness in this affair up to the end.

"His Highness will now give no more commissions, because all these gentlemen who should raise troops ask to be paid for their levies, which would have jeopardised the subsistence of our old troops for whom his Highness has destined it [the pay] together with the other expenses of the campaign. The people are warmly affectioned, and we could have as many troops as we liked, but the militia of the country will be of more ready use. His Highness will march to-day to Hunniton to approach the Royal Army, which is at Salisbury or near it.

"All these messieurs Anglais are very badly served with intelligence, so much so that we only learn very confusedly what is taking place in London, but we only have good news. The King should have arrived at Salisbury yesterday in person."

Meanwhile satisfactory news came from Plymouth. Bentinck announced on the 16th (26th) that the city would declare for the Prince the same evening. Two days later the Dutchmen who were assembled talking in Mr. Bentinck's room regarded it as certain, and agreed that the remaining ships to come with troops would land there. On the last day of the month, November 20 (30), Bentinck called for the secretary, Huygens, to come and seal a commission for the Earl of Bath as Governor of the town.[1] Bentinck was regarded as the Prince's mouthpiece, and anything he said was eagerly listened to and repeated. When the Prince's followers were discussing at Hindon the difficulties in coming to any agreement, especially in the matter of the Prince of Wales, Bentinck cut short the discussion, saying that "We have nothing to do with the thing, that all these matters must be decided by Parliament, and his Highness must abide by his Declaration."

By the time the march forward from Exeter was begun

[1] For the Earl of Bath's letter to William, see Dalrymple, ii.
Burnet's MSS.: "The last three days in which he stayed at Exeter the whole country came in, being the more encouraged to do it, because the Earl of Bath and the garrison of Plymouth had declared for him."

the Prince was surrounded by a company of gentlemen who had bound themselves to stand by him and each other in support of his Declaration. Exeter was left under command of Sir Edward Seymour, one of the leaders of the Tory Party, whose adhesion was of great importance. William left Exeter on November 21, shortly after James II. had arrived at Salisbury in the hope of giving battle to him. The Prince's armies marched to Axminster, through pouring rain, and by flooded roads so deep that the soldiers were sometimes wading up to their knees for half an hour at a time.[1] Moreover, they found very poor quarters when they arrived there. Even the King's secretary was "lodged in a very bad house, in a room which had no furniture except a bad bed," and the Court cook not having arrived, he would have fared poorly had not "Benting" invited him to share his meals while he was there, and kindly assured him that once Salisbury was left behind they would find good quarters everywhere.

From Axminster, December 3 (November 23), Bentinck writes to Herbert that he is very sorry that the English fleet has retired; he imagines it is in the Isle of Wight, and hopes that Herbert "has remained in Torbay during this terrible tempest."

All the remaining provisions were to be sent to the fleet, and Bentinck enumerates them: "165 barrels of biscuits, 141 hogshead of bear, and 14 pieces of brandy, which is little enough for the fleet, but it may help some vessels more in need of it than the rest." Lord Bath had sent word to say that he had supplies in Plymouth, and fortunately Seymour, Governor of Exeter, gave assurance that he could find further provisions. News had now come that the Prince's friends in the north, Danby, Devonshire and Delamere, were ready to join him as soon as they were within reach.

The Prince decided, on representations made by Herbert in a letter to Bentinck, that the fleet should winter in England. He wrote himself to say this on December 6 (November 26). Bentinck wrote too. "I am very glad that his Highness has decided that the fleet is to winter here." He adds: "I hope that one way or another we shall have some sort of news from Holland, whence we have learned nothing since our departure, which makes me anxious having left my family in the state you know."

[1] Huygens.

A more important piece of news was on the way. William wrote to Bentinck, who was out with a party of horse, to tell him that Churchill was on the way to join his army with about 400 horse; the army of James II. was reported to have turned back and the King to have returned to London. William warns Bentinck that if he meets troops coming to join them, he should send a safe conduct with them. The same evening Churchill arrived, the most influential adherent to the Prince who yet had joined him.

James, still unsuspicious of the rapid melting away of his supporters, learned of Churchill's defection the next morning. The distrust and confusion into which it threw the King, and the royal camp, were visible in his retreat. He reached London to learn that his daughter Anne had forsaken him and fled; and that the Prince of Orange was advancing on Salisbury with a court and camp daily and hourly increasing in importance.

At Salisbury van Citters, the Dutch Ambassador, arrived from London to greet the Prince, bringing the latest intelligence from Holland, and here, nearly a month after the event had taken place, William Bentinck learned of the death of his wife. The blow must have been expected, but after the long weeks of hope deferred and anxious suspense, it can have been felt none the less heavily. His Dutch secretary, Tromer, wrote to tell him of it: [1]

"While Heaven wills that we live here between excessive hope and fear in the absence of so many great friends, or trustworthy news of their ill or well being, so it has pleased Providence—and on me falls the task of telling your Lordship—to call hence out of this world into eternal happiness on the 10 (20) of this month, between 11 and 12 o'clock at night, your Lordship's highly born wife, my highly honoured mistress, to the great affliction not only of her Royal Highness, who stayed with her till her last sigh and with bitter tears left the body, but also of all the bystanders and servants. I made so bold, on leaving the death chamber, to ask her Highness in the presence of three or four ladies, who came in with us, to ask her in French, if in the absence of their

[1] Egerton MSS.

good Father, she would take and keep under her gracious protection three or four motherless children, which the Princess, still bitterly weeping, said amidst her tears that she would do. The particulars of this melancholy death, though I was present five quarters of an hour, up till the last moment that decency permitted, I shall leave to your Lordship's sisters, who, I doubt not, will do all that is usual. Only I will say without flattery, and with your permission, that the circumstances of your well born wife's end were quite extraordinary, both in her continued understanding after she was deprived of speech, and in the meeting with Madame Betty, her well born sister, who at the last moment had the forgiveness of Madame with a word whispered in her ear, being called by her Highness from the window where she was standing; and at the same moment pushed forward firmly by the bystanders—but about this another time more.

"The body has been put into a well lined coffin, the border studded with nails, wrapped in linen, and covered with aromatics and other drugs.

"Next Friday evening it will be taken from here with three coaches by a hired yacht to Delft, and thence will be put on to a yacht of His Royal Highness, which the gentlemen of the Council have allowed me, and forth to Rhoon into the family crypt of the former possessors, and it will be buried there until a new tomb of your Lordship's family shall be prepared. The Lord of Schoonheten will be chief mourner, and will lead your Lordship's son to the funeral. Vrouwe van Nienhuys [Bentinck's sister] takes charge with the greatest courage, and does me the honour to make me act under her orders, which pleases me heartily, and makes the labour appear sweet."

Bentinck's grief for the loss of his wife was deep and sincere. He was slow to write of it, but, in spite of his habitual reserve, it found expression in a letter to Herbert written from "Nieuburg" (Newbury) evidently in response to a reproach for his silence, December 10 (20):

"Monsieur,

"Would to God that my silence had been caused by what you suppose, that would be easily corrected, but it is wholly the contrary, it is my great grief for the death of my wife which has prevented me from rendering to my friends their due, for which I ask your pardon. But as each one has his weakness in this world, I will confess mine to you, which is an extreme affliction for my loss, and I even assure myself that you are enough my friend to pity my misfortune. Our public affairs go on better and better."

Among the Prince's adherents there were by this time men of all shades of political opinion, including many time-servers, who would soon make timorous and secret overtures to the master whom they had betrayed. Of such was the Earl of Clarendon. Overcome with shame and dismay at the desertion of his son, Lord Cornbury, he now thought it high time to follow him. On arriving at Salisbury, or Sarum as it was then more often called, Clarendon learned that the Prince was lodging at Hindon, about two miles away, at the house of a relation by marriage of his own. Here he repaired, and was received very kindly by William, who took his kinsman "into his bedchamber and talked above half an hour." The next morning he visited Mr. Bentinck, who

"fell on to speak of the occasion of the Prince's expedition, and said his Highness had given a sincere account of it in his Declaration, and that he has proceeded in pursuance thereof ever since his landing, though," said he, "there are not ill men wanting who give it out that the Prince aspires at the Crown, which is the most wicked insinuation that could be invented, that though three kingdoms would be a great temptation to other men, yet it would appear that the Prince preferred his word before all other things in the world, and would pursue his declaration in endeavouring to settle all matters upon a sure foundation. I told him if the Prince pursue this resolution everything will be very easy."

Thus reassured Clarendon repaired to Salisbury. There

the Prince arrived the same day, taking up his quarters at the Bishop's Palace, lately vacated by the hapless James. He made a State entry into the town. It struck the Dutchmen as very dirty, like all the other places they had passed through. The weather was now very cold, and Huygens, the secretary, going to attend the Prince in the evening in his room, found him with a severe attack of the cough which so frequently troubled him, especially in this country. A crowd assembled to see the Prince dine, among them, as the secretary noted, many very pretty women. Strict orders had been given, and faithfully observed, that the soldiers should pay for all they had. Clarendon, hearing it said that the Dutch did not pay their quarters, officiously reported it to Bentinck, "who," said he, "gave me very slight answer" and afterwards asked Sir Henry Capell "what I had to do, to meddle in these matters." "Bentinck shows his temper betimes," was Clarendon's comment, much annoyed to find so important a person as himself summarily dealt with on his own ground by a foreigner; while Bentinck was, no doubt, well aware of the value to be set on Lord Clarendon. Clarendon, still uneasy and ruffled, sought out Dr. Burnet the next day, and repeated the conversation to him, on which the Doctor, who did not love Mr. Bentinck, and had himself probably been snubbed by him on some occasions, replied, with his customary injudicious garrulity, that "Bentinck was an old servant, was bred up with his master, and had much by his kindness, but if it pleased God to bless the Prince, Bentinck would not be in the position of a favourite minister."

Lord Clarendon was still more perturbed next day when Dr. Burnet told him "there was a suspicion that he was not right in the Prince's interest," on which Clarendon retorted by asking "why he behaved himself in that manner yesterday at Prayers in the Cathedral, as to make all the congregation stare at him? For when the collect for the King was said he rose from his knees, sat down in his stall and made an ugly noise with his mouth."

At Hungerford William paused in his advance to await the arrival of the Commissioners whom he had consented to receive from James—Halifax, Nottingham and Godolphin. They arrived there two days later on December 8, and were conducted by Bentinck to the Prince. He received them in his bedchamber in the presence of the leading men of

the Kingdom who had joined him, and not, as they wished, in private.

After their audience the Commissioners withdrew to Bentinck's room to discuss the terms untrammelled by the Prince's presence.[1] Eventually it was agreed that Parliament should meet, and meanwhile the Prince consented to remain forty miles from London, while James's army were to do the same. The discussion terminated, Bentinck was sent on William's behalf to invite the King's Commissioners to dine with him, William announcing at the same time, that as the Inn was very unquiet, he would afterwards go to Littlecote Hall and lodge there.[2] But while James's Commissioners were treating with the Prince on his behalf, the King, having secretly dispatched the Queen and the Prince of Wales to France, took flight. The news of his desertion was the signal for the immediate outbreak of disorders in London. Those peers who were present, headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, took the requisite steps to restore order and declared for the Prince of Orange. His presence was now urgently needed. He rapidly advanced and was passing the night at Windsor, when in the early morning two gentlemen of Kent arrived and asked to see Dr. Burnet. They brought the news that the King had been stopped and roughly handled by some fishermen at Feversham, where he still was, his captors declaring they would obey no orders except such as came from the Prince. They desired to know the Prince's pleasure upon it. Dr. Burnet, who immediately realised the magnitude of the disaster to James, and was in his honest heart inexpressibly "affected with this dismal reverse of the fortune of a great Prince," had no mind to be the bearer of the tidings to William, but hastily wakened Mr. Bentinck and got him to go in and tell his master. The Prince's orders were that Zuylestein should go immediately to Feversham to set the King at liberty. The unfortunate incident, however, and the news of the ignominy the King had undergone, produced an immediate revulsion of feeling in his favour.

From Rochester James II. sent a letter to his nephew by Lord Feversham inviting him to a personal conference and announcing his own intention of returning to Whitehall. Feversham, by disbanding the forces under his command, had very greatly added to the public disorder and confusion

[1] Huygens. [2] Clarendon Correspondence, ii.

on the King's flight. He had no safe-conduct. The Prince ordered his arrest. Clarendon learned this from Mr. Bentinck, who showed him James's letter. "The Prince was very angry with my Lord Feversham," he said, "and had committed him; his Highness had answered the King's letter by M. Zulestein and desired his Majesty to stay at Rochester." Clarendon, nervously apprehensive, asked Bentinck "what could be the meaning of committing Lord Feversham, to which he made no other reply than to say with a shrug, 'Alas! my Lord!'—implying, 'Can you ask such a question at this point'" ? Clarendon, always obtuse, comments, "This proceeding startles me."

Zuylestein found James already returned to Whitehall. He delivered the Prince's message. A meeting of peers at Windsor decided that James should be required to withdraw from London. Rochester was eventually decided upon, at his own request, as his residence. The same evening Whitehall was quietly surrounded by Dutch troops.[1] James, to his credit be it recorded, refused to allow the veteran Lord Craven to offer any resistance. Early the next morning, which broke cold and wet, in accordance with the decision of the Lords at Windsor that he should retire from London, the last of the Stuart kings made his ignominious exit from Whitehall. William, who had been awaiting the course of events at Sion House, arrived at St. James's at four o'clock the same afternoon. All the way assembled crowds, bedecked with orange ribbons, welcomed the deliverer with shouts and acclamations, while the church bells rang; but he who loved not shows nor shoutings went by way of the Park and so disappointed the people waiting in the rain to see him, an impolitic act which gave great umbrage.

Clarendon was among those who hastened to Court to greet the Prince, but so great a crowd was there before him that he could not see him. He noted that Lord Mulgrave [2] was at the bedchamber door in hopes to get the first admittance,

[1] London was occupied by the British regiments in the service of the States. Sir John Reresby, coming to London on January 22, says: "I found London much changed . . . the streets were filled with ill-looking, ill-habited Dutch and other strangers of the Prince's army, and yet the city was so pleased with their deliverance, that they did not, or would not, perceive their deformity."—Huygens's *Journal*, December 27, 1688. Oldmixon, Burnet, etc.

[2] Lord Mulgrave (John Sheffield), had been disgraced from Court in 1682 for aspiring to the hand of Anne, but was afterwards restored to favour.

and that M. Bentinck cried out to him with genial sarcasm, "Comment, Milord, vous avez quitté votre bâton ?" to which the other cynically replied, "Il est bien temps," which was, if one considers it, a fitting reflection on the Revolution itself.

The Revolution was accomplished almost without bloodshed. The Prince's presence in London quickly restored order. A Convention was summoned of those members who had sat in the House of Commons in the reign of Charles II., to discuss the settlement of the country. On December 22 James made a second and this time a successful attempt at escaping to France, where, aided and abetted by Louis XIV., he soon began to make preparations for a descent on Ireland.

In an unpublished passage of the *History of His Own Time*, Burnet asserts that Bentinck was well liked in his own country, that in spite of the great favour in which the Prince held him, he never heard a word said against him, but in England the very fact of the Prince's confidence in him excited the resentment of men who considered that their services of a few months or weeks deserved greater recognition than the faithful service of a lifetime, at all events on their own ground. This feeling manifested itself at a very early stage, for at the beginning of January Huygens was told that the English already had a grudge against Bentinck, because he had so much authority. He seemed to have given special offence one day, when for some reason it was inconvenient for him to dine at his own quarters, he had asked one of these lords whether he might not eat at his table, a breach of etiquette that evidently caused much gossip.

Bentinck had remained with the Prince at St. James's, whither he had gone on the day of his arrival, for Huygens was present when they came to inspect the apartments at Whitehall which were being prepared for their occupation early in February [1]; and if the rambling, inconvenient old Palace was still as dirty as when Droste visited it and saw Charles II.'s pet dogs eating the meat, he threw to them out of the dishes, off the carpets and chairs, it must have needed much cleaning to suit the more fastidious tastes of his Dutch successor. Both Bentinck and William treated the secretary with a very kindly familiarity and consideration. On this

[1] January 24 (February 4).

occasion the Prince turned to Huygens [1] and asked him if he was homesick. The secretary diplomatically denied it, but William rejoined with a hint of weariness: "I should not have blamed you if you had been." The question was prompted perhaps by the thought of the pleasant woods of Honslaerdyck and the hunting at Dieren. In these days he often looked peevish, Huygens noticed, fretted by the delay in the political settlement. On his own account Huygens would have preferred some established Government post. He was not overpaid, and he soon found that money did not go as far in London as at the Hague. He solicited Bentinck's favour to get him a post in the Hague Reekencamer, but was told that he was indispensable at the moment, and when with more perseverance than discretion he got another Dutchman, Schulenberg, to return to the charge on his behalf, Bentinck replied testily, "But who the devil else should we get for the King?"

About the middle of January (8–18) a special mission arrived from Holland to congratulate the Prince on his success. It consisted of Dykvelt, Odijk and Witsen. William received them on the night of their arrival, with cordial greetings, asking gaily, "Now, is it a good thing that you advised me to undertake this work? Are people pleased about it?" The Ambassadors sent home a most favourable report on "the love people here have for his Highness"; "neither money nor men nor ships are wanting," wrote Witsen, an impression they saw cause to modify later on when the Prince's lack of volubility and affability began to give offence. William himself had no illusions on the subject, he knew just how much his popularity was worth, and on their first business meeting a few days later he said to Dykvelt, "Now it is Hosannah here, but soon perhaps it will be crucify him." [2]

With regard to the various questions at issue between the two countries relating to trade, shipping, and an offensive and defensive alliance, the Prince returned the "kindest answer that he would do everything possible." Unfortunately, for the subsequent relations of the Prince and Bentinck with Amsterdam, the burgomaster Witsen was allowed to feel slighted. He found himself a cipher;

[1] Huygens, Heer van Zulichem, was the son of Constantyn Huygens, who had spent his life in the service of the House of Orange.

[2] Gebhard's *Life of Witsen*.

the Prince obviously preferred to discuss Dutch affairs with Dykvelt. If unconsciously William felt that the conciliation of that truculent city was no longer of such paramount importance to him, he was to discover his mistake on the occasion of Bentinck's first visit to Holland some months later.

The Convention met on January 22, and long and bitter were the disputes which raged between the various parties in the State as to the course to be pursued. For days, for weeks, the debates and altercations dragged on. The Prince held himself studiously aloof, fretting at the delay but giving no sign. His apparent indifference appeared so unnatural to eager partisans that they held it to be an affectation on the part of a man who had a crown so nearly within his grasp. A crown was of no moment to William; England was only a factor, though an all-important factor, in international policy. Not only did the disorders in Ireland call urgently for immediate and firm handling, but every day's delay played into the hands of Louis XIV. No Englishman knew what was in the Prince's mind, and even Dr. Burnet, who had been so intimately connected with him, and who was no doubt frequently interrogated on the subject, could throw no light upon it. One man alone was in William's confidence, and to that man Dr. Burnet betook himself. Lord Halifax had moved that the Crown should be given to the Prince and the two Princesses, Mary and Anne, after him. Burnet saw that this made a great impression on Bentinck. "He spoke of it to me, as asking my opinion about it, but so that I plainly saw what was his own, for he gave me all the arguments that were offered for it." It was most natural, said Bentinck, that the sovereign power should only be in one person; a man's wife ought only to be his wife; such a settlement was a suitable return to the Prince for what he had done for the nation. A divided sovereignty was liable to great inconveniences, and, though there was less to be apprehended from the Princess of anything of that kind than from any woman alive, yet, added her husband's friend, with that hint of jealousy that sometimes tacitly betrays itself, "all mortals were frail, and might at some time or other of their lives be wrought on."

To these arguments Burnet hotly opposed himself. "It was a very ill return for the steps the Princess had

made to the Prince three years ago," he objected, besides which it would give a general ill impression of the Prince as insatiable and jealous in his ambition, would increase the rising dissatisfaction in the country, and, added the astute divine, "it would engage the one sex generally against the Prince, and in time they might feel the effects of that very sensibly." For his own part, concluded Burnet stoutly, he should oppose it to the best of his ability, considering what had passed in Holland on that head. The two men, so unlike in training or mental equipment, the one devoted to the Princess, the other to the Prince, discussed the matter till the small hours of the morning, and the next day Dr. Burnet returned to the charge, and going to find Bentinck desired to resign his position, for, said he, he would never oppose the Prince while in his service, but he must be free to fight this proposition with all the strength and credit he could command. Mr. Bentinck replied coldly that Dr. Burnet had better stay where he was till he saw some steps taken in that direction.

Bentinck's espousal of the Prince's claims to sole sovereignty did not fail to give offence. A number of the Prince's partisans, Bentinck among them, were assembled, after the fashion of the day, in the bedroom of Admiral Herbert, who was suffering from an attack of gout, and Bentinck was voicing what he knew to be the Prince's wish, that it would be better to confer the title of Queen Consort than that of Queen on the Princess Mary. Herbert forgot his gout, and briskly raising himself in bed exclaimed indignantly, "I would never have drawn my sword in the Prince's favour, if I could have suspected him of acting in such a way towards his wife." This unexpected demonstration on the part of a man with whom he had been on such cordial terms, and to whose fidelity the success of the Prince's expedition owed so much, gave Bentinck pause. He withdrew from the company, and when next he visited Herbert assured him that the Prince had no intention of insisting on this point, but he would be content with a sovereignty shared with the Princess, provided that the administration was vested in himself alone.[1]

An end was put to the discussion by William himself, who, sending for the Marquis of Halifax and the Earls of Shrewsbury and Danby, explained to them his own

[1] Mazure, iii. 351.

attitude in much the same words that Bentinck had used in talking to Burnet. The Prince said that :

" no man could think more of a woman than he did of the Princess, but he was so made that he could not think of holding anything by apron-strings, nor could he think it reasonable to have any share in the Government, unless it was put in his person, and that for term of life."

Any other settlement they thought fit to make he would not oppose, " but he would go back to Holland and meddle no more in their affairs."

So cold and unconcerned was the Prince's manner in delivering this address that some of those present believed it to be all artifice and contrivance. The Princess herself during this crisis of her husband's fortunes had been detained in Holland by frozen waters and contrary winds, but she had written to Danby strongly, even angrily, asseverating that she would never accept the throne except conjointly with and in subjection to her husband.

Thus it was at last decided that the throne should be occupied by William and Mary as joint sovereigns. On February 13, after the Declaration of Right had been read, the Crown was formally offered to William and Mary by Halifax, as spokesman, in the Banqueting Room of Whitehall, and accepted. When the summons from William to join him in England reached the Princess, it was with a heavy heart that she made ready to bid farewell to the land of her adoption and the people by whom she was so well beloved. Both Mary and the crowds who had gathered to see her set sail shed tears at the leavetaking ; tears, which as the pages of her diary tell us, were renewed on her arrival at meeting with her husband :

" We both shed tears of joy to meet, and of sorrow for meeting in England, both wishing it had been Holland, both bewailing the loss of the liberty we had left behind, and were sensible we should never enjoy here, and in that moment we found a beginning of the constraint we were to endure hereafter, for we dryed up our tears, lest it should be perceived when we went out."

As William had been invited by the leading men of

both parties, he was naturally obliged to choose his Ministers from Whigs and Tories, reserving for his own personal friends only the great places of the Household. Mr. Bentinck was appointed Groom of the Stole, with a salary of £5000 a year. After the Coronation, which took place with great magnificence, the titles of Baron Cirencester, Viscount Woodstock and Earl of Portland were conferred upon him. "He continued for ten years," says Burnet, "to be entirely trusted by the King and served him with great fidelity and obsequiousness, but he could never bring himself to be acceptable to the English nation." There is nothing in the contemporary history of the times to suggest that this verdict was untrue. With the people at large Bentinck could not have come into contact. His relations with individuals, with Sidney, for example, were intimate and cordial, but Sidney was loyally and wholeheartedly a friend and supporter. The repellent haughtiness of manner which Lord Clarendon so petulantly resented was probably typical of his relations with most of the English nobility, by whom his master was now surrounded. Bentinck knew as well or better than the King himself how little any of them were to be trusted; how the men who accepted office at his hands and took the oath of allegiance were secretly intriguing with James to make all safe for themselves in case of the Counter Revolution that for long seemed possible, if not probable. Successive political upheavals during the previous fifty years had weakened men's moral fibre. The leading men of that time were vacillating and self-seeking. The Revolution was hardly accomplished when the union of parties which had brought it about broke up into warring factions. The past dangers of despotism and persecution were immediately forgotten in party squabbles. Even before the constitutional liberties of England were safeguarded in the Bill of Rights, and her religious freedom assured in the Act of Toleration, the Church, the Army, Whigs and Tories were united only in disaffection.

Bentinck saw that his beloved master was regarded by the people he had liberated neither with gratitude nor affection. Small wonder that he made no attempt to ingratiate himself with them. They, on the other hand, felt their pride of birth and race wounded by the fact that a foreigner, who could not even write their language, had the supreme measure of the King's confidence. Bentinck

actually occupied the position of a Minister above Ministers, and, still more galling to the national pride, access to the King was almost impossible except through the medium of this watchdog, impregnable, incorruptible, unbending and secretly contemptuous and resentful.

"The English," says Hoffman, the Imperial Ambassador, "who are of all nations the least inclined for anything that isn't native cannot endure that a foreigner stands first in the confidence of their King. For that reason their antipathy for the Dutch is continually on the increase."

In six months the English aristocracy regarded William with a feeling akin to resentment. Behind their expressions of gratitude lurked mistrust and suspicion, caused primarily by the fact that he was a foreigner, but still more by his taciturnity and lack of social amenities. Mary did everything possible to atone for it by her own charm and tact, but the King found himself confronted and hampered by a people who, it seemed, preferred party strife to peace within their borders. More and more he gave his confidence to the small circle of his Dutch intimates, above all to Portland. The popular view concerning the Royal Family was concisely expressed in some doggerel lines :[1]

"The King thinks
The Queen tells
The Princess [Anne] eats } all things."
Prince George drinks
Lord Portland takes

On the other hand, in Holland the Dutch were becoming dissatisfied, and quick to believe that their absentee Stadtholder was preferring English interests to their own.

A minor cause of offence was the Court's removal from Whitehall, where in the easygoing days of the Restoration the King had always been accessible. For Mary the associations of the place were painful. For William, accustomed as he was to the keen sea breezes of the Hague, its low-lying, foggy situation seemed intolerably unhealthy. Kensington House was bought and adapted to the needs of the Royal Family during the summer. Bentinck was given apartments

[1] Quoted by Hoffmann in German and by Huygens in Dutch.

there; in the spring his sister "Nyenhuys" brought over his children, the eldest little girl, Lady Mary, and "Mietje," the younger one.

It was more than a year since his wife's death, and family business must have called urgently for his return, though public duties retained him in England. It is doubtful whether his sister Nyenhuys remained to keep house for him when she brought over the children.[1] He had apartments at Whitehall and also at the new Palace at Kensington, and a remark of Madame Nyenhuys to Huygens that "she had heard that I also was to have a room in the house at Kensington" points to the children's being there with him. Bentinck seems to have allotted rooms as he pleased at Whitehall, for when some question arose about those occupied by Huygens, he replied that Lord Portland had given them to him. More than once Bentinck showed a kindly interest in Huygen's own family affairs, and once at Hampton Court, when both men were at work in the King's room and William asked if Huygens's wife was also at Hampton Court, Bentinck joined in and said, "Dutch women will not live here, because your women have so railed at the country. They have written and said that it was a devil of a country, so dirty and so wicked."

He became superintendent of the Royal Gardens in June, knowing the King's formal Dutch tastes. William's intensive education had not bred in him a love of books, but he cared greatly for pictures, for the furnishing of his houses, and for gardens. The King needed any distraction he could find at this time, for the political situation was so straining his powers of endurance that his servants remarked how he talked continually to himself and his lips moved often in silent colloquy or protest.

In distributing official responsibilities William had retained in his own hands that which was to him the most important of all. He was his own Foreign Minister. Foreign affairs now urgently demanded his presence abroad. England declared war with France in May.[2] The Emperor, Spain, Brandenburg and Holland did the same. But

[1] Huygens, April 1689.

[2] The Grand Alliance (May 12, 1689), by which the Emperor recognised William as King of England, marks a turning-point in the combination of Europe warned to take action against France after the devastation of the Palatinate by Louis XIV.'s troops.

Scotland was in rebellion, and in March James II. had landed in Ireland with an army. The settlement of Ireland was the most pressing business; till that was achieved the King could not go to the Continent. In Ireland the Lord Deputy, Tyrconnel, was aiming at the destruction of the English ascendancy with the aid of France. To this end he raised an army and overpowered the Protestants of the south and west of Ireland, except those who succeeded in escaping to the north, where some of their co-religionists and fellow-countrymenhad taken refuge in Enniskillen and Londonderry. Here they stood at bay, waiting for the deliverance from England which was so long delayed. This was the position of affairs in the summer of 1689.

Preparations were hurried on for sending an army to Ireland under the command of Marshal Schomberg. By August the troops were ready for embarkation. Bentinck was sent to inspect them at Chester.[1] He received a brief letter of instruction from the King, the only letter which was preserved by him during the year 1689. It is dated August 3 (13), 1689, and headed, "Instructions for the Earl of Portland on going to meet M. le Marshal de Schomberg at Chester." If Marshal Schomberg and the Count de Solmes were able to embark together, so the letter ran, they were to do so for Carlingford Bay or elsewhere on advice of those who knew the coast. Their embarkation was, however, to depend on the news of the fall or relief of Londonderry. The city was relieved on July 30, after a siege of 105 days, which for gallantry and endurance was one of the most memorable in history. The Irish were shortly afterwards defeated at Newtown Butler near Enniskillen. On landing in Ireland Schomberg found himself in possession of greatly inferior forces. The supplies for the army, which should have followed him from England, were delayed by treachery. He was obliged to remain upon the defensive. His men dwindled away from disease. In October both armies went into winter quarters. In Scotland William had entrusted the conduct of affairs to Sir James Dalrymple and his son, and to Lord Melville, who had been in Holland as a refugee. Episcopacy had been established against the wishes of the people, and on the news of the Revolution a Convention was summoned which accepted William and

[1] Luttrell. Besides commanding a regiment of Dutch Guards, Bentinck was a Lieutenant-General in the English army.

Mary as King and Queen and restored Presbyterianism. The standard of James was, however, raised by Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, who called the Highlanders to arms.

Though neither William nor Bentinck ever set foot in Scotland, Bentinck took an important part in the management of Scottish affairs during this year and later, and much Scottish correspondence passed through his hands or was answered directly by him. The first of these letters, dated from Hampton Court, April 1, 1689, assures Lord Melville of the King's satisfaction with his conduct, and of the measures taken for the protection of loyalists; troops were marching north under command of Ginkel and Admiral Herbert had arrived upon the coast of Scotland. Major General Mackay, who had accompanied William from Holland, was sent to take command of the English troops. The clans were divided among themselves. The Earl of Argyle, head of the Campbells, had many enemies. Dundee had attempted, with some success, to unite the clans who were hostile to the Campbells in favour of King James. The following letter from Bentinck alluding to these differences of Argyle and the clans was addressed, it is conjectured, to General Mackay:

"Sir,—I have safely received your last letters of the 26th of this month, it would be very useful to try to adjust the differences between my Ld. Argyle and the people of the Highlands of Scotland. The King has given orders to satisfy the said Count so well, that you can work at quieting the minds of the others. I hope that by the march of our troops you will be entirely secure. I doubt not that you will have received the news from Londonderry, which makes us fear its loss, that will make Irish affairs very difficult. It is surprising that the Convention so long delays resolving whom to send here." [1]

At the end of July Mackay, advancing from Perth, was defeated by Dundee at Killiecrankie (July 27). The effect of this defeat was, however, neutralised by the consummate skill with which Mackay drew off his men, and by the death of Dundee himself. The Highlanders were left

[1] Translated from *Leven and Melville Papers.*

without a leader of ability, and it was not long before the clansmen broke up and returned to their homes.[1]

The continued strife of factions in the English Parliament had dragged on during the year to the great detriment of the public interest and the exasperation of the King. He had said to Kaunitz long before :

" It has always been a special characteristic of the English nation to throw themselves with a greater amount of zeal into their internal affairs, and rather to concern themselves with trouble and confusions within, than to strive to avert in due time the dangers threatening them from without." [2]

When Parliament reassembled in the autumn the Whigs attempted to pass a Corporation Bill aimed at disfranchising the Tory Party. It was defeated by a small majority, and the Tories reintroduced the Bill of Indemnity for past offences, which had been dropped in the last session. The Whigs included in it so many exceptions that finally William, weary of their folly and spite, decided to return to Holland, leaving the Queen upon the throne. This brought Whigs and Tories alike to their senses. The King was implored to reconsider his decision. At last he yielded, but at the same time stated his intention of going to Ireland in person. He then dissolved Parliament, and when it reassembled finally disappointed the Whigs in their thirst for vengeance by passing an Act of Grace from the Crown (May 1690) declaring oblivion for all past political offences.

At the beginning of the New Year William Bentinck left England for Holland, to take part in a Conference of the Allies against France. On his arrival he found that there too dissensions had arisen, and faction was once more raising its head in Amsterdam. During recent negotiations for a treaty between England and Holland, the Dutch felt that their Stadtholder had set English interests above

[1] The desperate condition of the troops after Killiecrankie was represented to Portland. *Leven and Melville Papers*, September 1689.

[2] The English idiosyncracies puzzled and irritated Bentinck still more than William ; and Lord Dartmouth relates that he once observed to the King " that the English were the strangest people he had ever met with ; for by their own accounts of one another, there was never an honest nor an able man in the 3 kingdoms ; and he readily believed it was true." The King told him he was very much mistaken, for there were as wise and honest men among them as were in any part of the world (and fetched a great sigh), " but they are not my friends."

those of his native land, and their Envoys had signed with reluctance. There was a feeling of resentment towards William which found expression in a back-handed attack on him through his Ambassador. Amsterdam asserted that Bentinck was no longer entitled to take his seat in the Assembly of the States of Holland, because he had taken the oath of allegiance to, and was in the service of, a foreign Power, basing their objection on the resolution of the States of Holland against the Earl of Leicester when he came as Ambassador of Elizabeth in 1586. So that after having drawn on himself the antipathy of the English, because they believed that with him and the King his master English interests were subordinated to those of Holland, on his return home he found himself regarded and treated by Amsterdam as no more belonging to his fatherland and as serving the interests of a foreign Power. It became increasingly evident that William, and William alone, was the connecting link which bound together the two countries. His compelling power coerced alike the obstinate and recalcitrant Dutch burgher and the factious and unscrupulous English nobility.

This question was complicated with another, a dispute concerning the election of the Sheriffs of Amsterdam. It occupies a great deal of space in contemporary Dutch history, involved a prolonged and lengthy correspondence on the part of the King and Bentinck, and dragged on for many weeks, paralysing the activities of Holland, and delaying her active participation in the war. Consequently it assumes an importance quite disproportionate to the issues at stake. It was regarded by William, and rightly so, as one more attempt of the oligarchical party in the State to assert itself against the power of the House of Orange, especially now that that power was reinforced by the English Crown ; he saw in it also French diplomacy. He had intimated to the States-General that he would continue to hold the office of Hereditary Stadtholder while on the English throne, and to exercise the rights belonging to it. Thus it was also an attempt on the part of Amsterdam to limit his prerogative. Briefly the dispute was as follows. The Councils of the towns were accustomed to nominate a number of Sheriffs from among whom the Stadtholder selected those he wished to serve for the following year. In 1689 the Council of Amsterdam transmitted the list of

nominations to the Court of Holland, instead of to the Stadtholder, who was then in England, but the Court of Holland had on that occasion forwarded William the list; the Sheriffs were chosen by him and served their term without opposition. But William was much displeased over the whole matter, especially with the Burgomaster Witsen then in England. In 1690 the Council of Amsterdam, however, petitioned the States of Holland to make the selection of Sheriffs without reference to William, as the interval between their nominations and their being sworn in was so short. The States of Holland refused and held that the claim of Amsterdam was invalid. Long and acrimonious debates ensued, and this was the position of affairs on William Bentinck's arrival.

The King wrote almost immediately after his departure.[1]

"If I did not believe you still in the river, I should be in terrible disquietude because of the tempest which has never ceased since your departure. I shall not rest till I have news of you and know that you are happily arrived in Holland."

This letter was followed by another one the next day—Kensington, January 4 (14):

"I have just received your letter of yesterday and am overjoyed that you have not been at sea in this great wind, but I hope that you will be able to go out this evening, thus I doubt whether this letter will find you. I write to you on the chance, and send you enclosed the letters from Holland that I have received at the same time as yours, which trouble me not a little, with only too much reason as you will see.

"I ought not to give way, for I believe myself lost if I do, which you can say on my behalf to these gentlemen, and as I am not the cause of the confusion that may arise from this business, I must await whatever a Divine Providence orders. What I most fear is that I shall not be supported by the other towns as ought to be done, and it seems to me that I already observe some timidity on the part of the Pensionary. God I hope will draw me out of this embarrassment as from all the others in which I am which

[1] Kensington, January 3 (13), 1689 (90).

are not inconsiderable. You must return me the letters when you have read them."

The tempest still continued, and the King wrote again on January 6 (16):

"All night I have been very anxious about the great wind, which has sunk this morning, so I hope that you will enter the Meuse this morning. The more I think about the affair of Amsterdam the more anxious I am, although fully persuaded that I ought not to admit any expedient. There is only one of which I have bethought myself since I wrote to you. It is that I should send enclosed to you a letter of Election to the Sheriff of Amsterdam, as usual, and a blank signed for the names of the Sheriffs, which M. le Pensionary should fill in with those that the burgomasters shall have marked, that is pricked, as they are accustomed to do, and if they will send 'une lettre de nomination' addressed to me to M. le Pensionary, he will open it, and they will have the elections before the fixed day, and by that means their great scruples about the day will be removed, and moreover they will have elected those they wish for, which seems to me ought to induce them to accept this expedient, if they have not other views, which I fear most. . . . It is vexatious that they have so good pretext as their privilege, which will throw dust in the eyes of men, who do not wish to see the malice hidden therein. What most vexes me about the expedient that I propose is that the burgomasters will have their own way in the Election, which is the source of this unhappy dispute, but I believe that this inconvenience is less than if the Court of Justice or the States of Holland made the Election, since by that I should be dispossessed of a right that I claim belongs to me."

So strongly did William feel on this point, and so tenacious was he of his rights, that he went on to say that whatever the consequences, and whatever the inconvenience caused to himself and his allies by carrying matters to extremities, he would persist in doing so, as he believed it to be a crucial point. He trusted, he said, to Divine Providence to whom

his motives were known. The Corporation Bill, the King added, was still before the House, and the letter concludes :

" As for affairs here there has been no change since my letter of Friday, except that they say a thousand untruths about your journey, among others that you have gone to bring me more foreign troops, or that you were sent to negotiate a Peace with France, the Dutch having already made terms " (" déjà traité ").

So far William had not received any news of his Ambassador. He writes again from Kensington, January 10 (20), 1690 :

" I am extremely impatient to have news of you, and to know you happily arrived in Holland. There is no post come since I wrote to you by Jan Verhuelt, whom I fear is still at Harwich, waiting a packet boat for his passage. At present two posts [ordinarys ?] are wanting, those of last Tuesday and Friday. To-day is the great day in the House of Commons for the Corporation Bill. At the end of my letter I will send you the result, as at present I am writing to you before midday. I find that people are beginning to be very anxious about my journey to Ireland, especially the Wiggs, who fear to lose me too soon, before they have done with me what they wish, as for their friendship you know how much that is to be counted upon in this country. I have not yet said anything about my intention to Parliament, but I think I shall do so next week. However, I am beginning to have my equipage prepared and everyone talks about it in public. [The King had written so far when the post from Holland arrived.] I am deeply annoyed to see the tricks those Amsterdam people want to play you, which only proceeds from enmity to me. I hope that you will be able to surmount it, and that the other towns will support you. If an agreement is reached about the business of the Sheriffs' Election, according to the expedient that I sent you, which is the only one to which I will agree, I intend that you shall be included in it, without which I will not have any agreement. . . . It is now 11 o'clock at night, and at 10 o'clock

the Lower House was still sitting, so I cannot write you the result of the affair by this ordinary. The previous question the Tories have carried by five votes, so you can judge whether the thing is very hotly disputed. I am so overcome by sleep, and my cough worries me so much that I don't know how to tell you any more about it.

" Yours till death."

The King wrote again without waiting for a reply to this letter :

" Such a furious tempest from Saturday night till Sunday that I have never heard the like, it has caused terrible havoc with the chimneys and roofs of the houses in the town, and thrown down more than thirty trees in St. James's Park. It has done much harm to shipping at Dover, and I much fear for what may have been done in Holland as the wind was directly on that coast.

" You will have heard that the Tories have thrown out the Corporation Bill. This week the Bills of Pains and Penalties and Indemnity are to come on from which you will see that the session is drawing to an end. But I am no sooner free of one great embarrassment than I fall into another, for everyone cries out so loudly against my Irish journey that I do not know how to propose it to Parliament, for certainly I shall have a unanimous address begging me not to go there. So here I am the most embarrassed man in the world, not knowing what resolution to form. . . . God, I hope, will show me what I ought to do."

The Amsterdam dispute meanwhile continued with cumbrous prolixity on both sides in as leisurely a manner as if there were no such thing as a European war threatening the borders of Holland. Bentinck was strongly supported by his own order, but Amsterdam declared that her deputies should absent themselves from the Council as long as he was present, leaving only their Pensionary to report progress. On January 24 the nobles delivered a resolution to the Council of Holland in which they took strong exception to the Amsterdam deputies absenting themselves without giving the Council time to deliberate on the question of the

Sheriffs, and to their whole conduct with regard to the Earl of Portland, especially in respect of Amsterdam's declaring that they would regard whatever business was done in his presence as nugatory and invalid. Finally they declared such action in the highest degree dangerous in the present crisis. "Those of Amsterdam" supported their action, though they now had the grace to add that they had nothing against the Earl of Portland personally, but his taking his seat was illegal. William's suspicion that French intrigue was at the bottom of the whole business appears from the following letter to Bentinck:

"Kensington, January 17 (27).

"I am very glad to hear that the towns have been so unanimous in supporting your right to sit in the Assembly, and I do not see what Messieurs d'Amsterdam can do in the future to prevent it, however their extravagance troubles me, for assuredly if they continue, not only the Republic will suffer from them, but all those in their alliance, and I cannot think whether those Amsterdam people have taken, or wish to take, measures with France. . . . I say nothing more about the election of the Sheriffs, since to-morrow being the nomination day, that business must be already settled one way or another, and I do not know if I ought to wish that they should accept the expedient which I have proposed, about which I hope that you will have proceeded with all the necessary circumspection in dealing with such extraordinary people as they are.

"The Prince de Waldec," the King adds, "writes me such lamentable letters by every post representing the ridiculous figure he cuts at the Hague. He knows that as to his just subjects of annoyance I can hinder them as little as those they give me, which are no less than his."

The Prince de Waldeck had been appointed Captain General of the Dutch Forces. No wonder he chafed at the long delay in the meeting of Allied Powers to discuss military affairs, and that the campaign, when at last he took the field in the Spanish Netherlands, was unsuccessful.

In spite of a letter from the King to Amsterdam expressing his wishes, the city finally decided not to give way and to

abide by its privileges. On January 30 they again requested the Court of Holland to choose the Sheriffs, the States having separated till February 7. The Court declined and returned the envelope containing the nominations unopened. Nevertheless Bentinck must have written hopefully about the situation, for the King says, January 21 (31) :

" I am very glad that affairs seem to take a good turn. I highly approve of the conduct that you have pursued.

" If an agreement is come to with Amsterdam, it is greatly to be wished that I should establish a good relationship with them, although I believe them very difficult, and cannot persuade myself that they have not some intrigues with France. As for Witsen he left England by no means satisfied, whatever he appeared to be, and the report he gave of affairs in England was very prejudicial.[1] Enfin ! you will see what you can do towards establishing a better relationship between them and myself. . . .

" To-day is the great day of the Bill of Indemnity, according to all that I can learn, there will be much heat, and nothing decided. Men's minds are becoming more and more embittered against one another."

A few days later the King writes again on the subject of English politics :

" . . . As for what passes here it is difficult to write about it, all being intrigues from morning till night, and parties growing more and more heated against each other. As to the Act of Indemnity, I think nothing will come of it, although it has been two days on the tapis. . . . Everyone continues strongly to disapprove of my going to Ireland on divers grounds. However, it has not yet been spoken of in Parliament of which the session will soon end."

William was growing more and more impatient at the interminable delay over the Amsterdam affair. On January 28 (February 7) he writes :

[1] Witsen seems to have been a dull but honest man, with an almost heroic obstinancy where he believed the privileges of his order to be concerned, and quite incapable of seeing further than Amsterdam.

"Your letters have caused me no little vexation, as I see no more appearance of accommodation with Amsterdam, and how to put an end to it at present! I foresee terrible difficulties if they continue in their obstinacy, as there is ground for believing, and being persuaded, as I am, that they are in intelligence with France. If the Court of Justice had not had the impudence or malice to return the nominations there would have been a way out of this vexatious business, but at present I own that I cannot foresee the end. . . . God I hope will be able both to give courage to our friends and intimidate our enemies."

The King goes on to say that necessary as Bentinck's presence in Holland is, he must leave as soon as he receives this letter, as he cannot any longer be spared—a day or two more or less is of no consequence. "I rely entirely on your judgment" ("me fiant entièrement sur vostre jugement").

The King expected to begin his journey to Ireland early in March, so that Bentinck's presence in England would have been very necessary.

Turning to domestic affairs, the King continues:

"You will doubtless be surprised to learn that I prorogued Parliament yesterday till the 2nd of April [1] for reasons which I will tell you when you return, as you will see my harangue in print. It seemed to me that the Tories were very pleased, but not the Wiggs. They were very greatly surprised when I spoke to them, having communicated my intention to one person only. I saw faces long as an ell, change colour twenty times while I was speaking. . . . All these details on your welcome return. Finally you see that all at present depends on a good success in Ireland."

The King's scheme of going to Ireland was regarded as suicidal; to undertake the hardships of a campaign in the unsatisfactory state of his health, and in a climate which during the winter had brought about the death of hundreds, even thousands, of soldiers, must, it was said,

[1] To put an end to the disputes over the Indemnity Bill. The Tories, at whom it was aimed, were naturally "very pleased."

M.r. NICOLAAS WITSEN,
Burgermeester en Raad van Amsterdam,
Extraordinaris Ambasfadeur in
Groot-Britanje enz.
H. Rotharen del. naar 't origineel by den Hr Mr N. Witsen, Secretaris van Amsterdam.
J. Houbraken fec.

NICOLAAS WITSEN, BURGOMASTER OF AMSTERDAM IN 1688.

have been suggested to him by some traitor, who hoped to overthrow the existing settlement by his death. The Queen most of all dreaded the result of what she describes as "the terriblest journey to me that he ever took," and "I pity the poor Queen," William wrote to Bentinck feelingly, one of the very rare occasions on which he ever alludes to her in his letters.

The King's embarrassments were intensified by want of money at this crucial period. In the midst of giving Bentinck directions for the return of certain regiments and for raising others, he tells him he is "very short of money more so than you could believe, which will not make the least difficulty."

At this point in the letter it appears that one has arrived from Bentinck saying that Dykvelt and the Pensionary are anxious that he should remain in Holland till the Amsterdam affair is settled. Notwithstanding the King urges his return, unless it is absolutely necessary for him to stay, of which he must be the judge.

Ill health and worry were telling severely on William's spirits at this juncture. On February 4 (14) he writes: "It is impossible to describe in a letter the kettle of fish in which things are here at present. You will find their aspect greatly changed on your return." After giving directions for the arms and ammunition required by him, William adds:

"Preparations in Holland go on very slowly by land and sea, which causes me acute anxiety; ours here do not go on as I should wish, for there is a dilatoriness and incorrigible negligence, although I assuredly work more than I ought with regard to my health. I have been inconvenienced for three or four days with illness, which puts me out of condition for acting as is necessary in this crisis, and makes me very weak."

Greatly as William, ill, overworked, without one zealous and trustworthy subordinate to whom he could delegate important business, needed the presence of his friend and servant, Bentinck was still longer detained in Holland. Writing on February 7 (17) the King acknowledges two letters from Bentinck, from which he sees that his presence

in the Hague is still necessary till some way out of these unhappy differences can be found.

"I am very glad about the firmness of the members of the Assembly, which will, I hope, at last reduce the Amsterdam people to reason. . . . I much fear that when you leave, there will be no longer there the vigour which this crisis requires. I hope that the correspondence you have established between the Pensionary and the principal members of the largest towns will produce a good effect. I am much annoyed at the mischief these differences are causing, and the advantage our enemies will derive from it, especially France."

After urging Bentinck to hasten the preparations for war, William tells him that he has convoked a Parliament for March 20 (30), and continues: "You may imagine what eagerness and intrigues there are about the new elections. The animosity of the two parties increases from day to day, and causes me terrible anxiety."

Of the preparations for his Irish campaign, on February 11 (21) the King writes:

"One loses patience in seeing the slowness of the people here in all they do, although I hurry from morning to night, I can't come to the end of it . . . all this gives me more vexation than I ought to have, but you know my unhappy temperament."

There have never been so many cabals and intrigues for elections to a new Parliament, William adds, and he reiterates his anxiety for Bentinck's return.

By February 14 he had decided that it would be impossible to leave for Ireland before April, as all his efforts were unavailing to accomplish his preparations more rapidly. About this time continued contrary winds interrupted this correspondence, so that William had the additional anxiety of not knowing how his affairs in Holland were progressing. On February 14, 18, and again on the 21st, he writes to say he is anxious at receiving no letters. Bentinck on his part was anxious to have the King in Holland, where his presence would have united differences and carried all before him.

Affairs in Amsterdam had been at a deadlock since the States had decided against the city of Amsterdam's interpretation of its privileges and resolved that the nominations should be sent to William in accordance with his letter, and much fruitless discussion had ensued. Between Amsterdam and the English Parliament William was becoming desperate: "Me voilà bien embarrassé comment faire obèir Mess. d'Amsterdam à la resolution des Estats," he writes, February 25 (March 7).

"Oh, if I could only make a tour in Holland there would be no difficulty, as you say, but it is at present impossible with Parliament assembling to-morrow three weeks, and having to cross and recross the sea, the time is too short. Thus you must consult with my friends how I am to act. I am ready to do anything. . . . I do not know how it will be possible for you to find money without them, and if you don't find it, everything falls to the ground unless Divine Providence assists us marvellously."

Meanwhile:

"People here [February 28 (March 10)] talk of nothing but the elections for Parliament. It appears that the Tory Party will be larger than in the last, though the Wiggs use every kind of artifice. . . . Parties are so heated against each other that I fear I shall suffer as well as the public. I am in such great straits for money that it is unimaginable. I shall not lose courage as long as I am able to sustain it. I hope that the Good God will aid me and not abandon me. I am continually unspeakably impatient to see you. If it were possible without abandoning everything here, I would embark to-morrow to come and find you in Holland, being convinced of the reasons you give for the necessity of my presence there, and my inclinations would carry me there, but . . . it is impracticable and so we must think of other means of bringing these Amsterdam people to reason. I know very well all the difficulties that you mention, but we must find among them the least bad, and the quickest that we can, and let me know it as soon as possible, for it

is impossible for me to judge from here which will be best in this conjuncture."

If God grants him a safe return from Ireland, the King concludes, he will certainly cross to Holland, "where I know well that my presence there will not have the effect that it would have at this moment, which causes me mortal vexation."

Better news was in store for the harassed King. The Pensionary Heinsius, one of the wisest statesmen and diplomatists of his day, persuaded Amsterdam to adopt a more compromising attitude. Early in March affairs had so far advanced that Witsen went to the Hague, and at first alone, and afterwards with the other Amsterdam deputies had an interview with Bentinck and Heinsius, which resulted in the nominations of the Sheriffs being sent to the States, with the request that they would elect them themselves. The States at once resolved that the nominations should be sent to William to make the election as Stadtholder of the Province, and that meanwhile the outgoing Sheriffs should retain their seats; and that neither the privilege of Amsterdam nor of his Majesty should be held to be in any way curtailed or diminished.

The opposition to the Earl of Portland's taking his seat was also withdrawn, Witsen and the other deputies attended the Council in his presence, and he shortly afterwards returned to England. The nominations were sent to William, by him selected, and returned.

"I own that I cannot help being very glad that the affair with Amsterdam is adjusted," wrote the King (March 4 (14)), "although I am entirely of your opinion that if I had been able to go to Holland it must have put it out of their power to do mischief in the future, for assuredly they will not leave me in peace till the magistrature is purged of some ill-disposed (meschant) people. You have acted very generously with regard to your own particular business, and one could not be more satisfied with the conduct that you have pursued in all this affair."

A tedious business even in narration, yet the record of it is relevant to an understanding of the people who transacted it, no less because of the importance which the Dutch

attached to it than because of the tenacity with which William stuck to his point. It was a tenacity distinct from the immovability of Bentinck when the line which he was to take had been pointed out to him, because it was founded on the insight which selects the prime importance of what is seemingly insignificant. Yet also it exhibits the nationality and aims of the Dutch King who regarded Wiggs and Tories with detached contempt, but could busy himself and his chief Ambassador with the petty politics of Amsterdam. Was it because he was a Dutchman and England to him insignificant by the side of the Netherlands, or had he a presage that the part of makeweight for which he cast his adopted country was henceforward always to be hers in the shifting balance of power of Europe ?

April 1690 to October 1692

CHAPTER VII

THE IRISH EXPEDITION—BENTINCK IN SCOTTISH AFFAIRS—CAMPAIGNS OF 1691–1692

At the beginning of April William Bentinck returned to England, having found time in the multiplicity of his other business to bring sixteen pounds of chocolate for Huygens, which did not escape the searching scrutiny of the Custom House officials; three gulden a pound were claimed for it.[1] At this time the King was hurrying on his preparations for the Irish Campaign, to which, as he told Bentinck, he had to attend in detail personally; and striving through the mediation of Heinsius to compose the differences and adjust the conflicting interests of the Allies in Council.

He wrote to apprise Heinsius of Bentinck's return:

"Since my last the Earl of Portland has arrived here last Saturday who praised most highly the good conduct maintained by your Excellency, and the assistance which he has had from it, for which I must again thank your Excellency in the strongest terms and desire you to continue in your zealous good will."

The new Parliament had assembled in March with a Tory majority led by Danby, now Lord Caermarthen.

In the new Parliament, the disputations over the Abjuration Bill, as long and copious as those of the Amsterdam Burghers in respect of the Sheriffs, had one effect by no means desired by the King. The Act of Grace from the Crown which granted an amnesty for all past political offences had led to the Earl of Shrewsbury's resignation. He was a man of a charm and sweetness of manner to which his contemporaries all bear witness, but lacking in moral courage and decision of character like most politicians of

[1] Huygens, April 3, 1690, p. 251.

the day. Already in 1689 he had sought to retire from the Ministry on the score of ill health, being uneasy at the King's increasing alienation from the Whig Party. At that time the King had expressed his value and esteem for him in the kindest terms and had sent William Bentinck to represent to him the ill effect his retirement would have on public affairs.[1] Bentinck succeeded in persuading him to remain. Later he again applied to Portland to induce the King to accept his resignation, but was obliged to continue in office. His resentment at the King's action over the Abjuration Bill was, however, so strong as almost to upset his mental balance. Dr. Burnet, finding him in an angry and excited state, with the Seals in his hand, on the way to the King, fortunately dissuaded him from doing anything that night, and eventually the Seals were delivered to William by Bentinck. The King "loved the Earl of Shrewsbury," says Burnet, "and it troubled him more than I thought a thing of that sort could have done." One hopes that James II. was overstating the case when he reported to the French Government that "There is the Earl of Shrewsbury, who being secretary to the Prince of Orange, has relinquished his office by my order." It is clear that treasonable correspondence had taken place and that Shrewsbury was now suffering from compunction.

The King was now on the point of departure for Ireland; all his preparations were complete down to an "itinerant house," designed by Sir Christopher Wren, "for his Majesty to lye in the field," and specially prepared medicine chests, when a very serious Jacobite plot was discovered. It was intended that an insurrection in England and a French invasion should take place at the same time. One of the conspirators, a man called Fuller, turned King's evidence. The Queen's uncle, Clarendon, was proved to be deeply implicated. It is significant of William's single-minded pursuit of the object in hand that though the crisis was a serious one he refused to abandon the Irish expedition and started forthwith, leaving the government in the hands of the Queen with an advisory Council of Nine.[2]

The King's confidence in the English people in this emergency was justified. The whole nation rallied round

[1] See Coxe's *Shrewsbury*, part i. chapter i.

[2] See Mary's *Diary* for her opinion of her counsellors. "A general peevishness and syllenesse in them all except Lord Sydney."

the Queen in his absence. Even Shrewsbury hastened to London to put his services at her disposal. Soon after William's departure, Admiral Herbert, now Lord Torrington, suffered a disgraceful defeat off Beachy Head by the French fleet under Tourville, who afterwards burnt Teignmouth. About the same time came the news that the Allies under Waldeck had been defeated by Luxemburg at the battle of Fleurus. But the national spirit, so far from being depressed by these dangers, was roused to the highest pitch of resistance. The evening before he began his journey William called Dr. Burnet into his closet, and said that "for his part he trusted in God, and would either go through with his business or perish in it; he only pitied the poor Queen"—repeating that twice with great tenderness. "He lamented the hardship of having to go against his father-in-law in person," and asking for the good Bishop's prayers, he dismissed him "deeply affected." [1]

On June 4 they started. William took Bentinck as his travelling companion, rejecting the proposal of Prince George of Denmark that he should have a seat in his carriage.

The journey to Ireland was of necessity a very slow affair, even in summer. The Secretary Huygens started a day in advance, at six o'clock in the morning in a hired coach, breaking his journey at St. Albans for the midday meal. On Wednesday he reached Northampton, where the Royal party was to sleep, having started the same morning. The King was met everywhere by the local nobility and gentry, and the roads were lined with people waiting to see him pass. The Dutchmen were impressed by the many handsome faces among the countrywomen. A halt was made at Chester, where the King attended service in the cathedral. He was lodged at a country house with his entourage. On the 10th (20th), the wind being favourable, he resolved to go on board the yacht *Mary*. The place of embarkation was Hoylake, then consisting of only a few houses; the way to the village led along a pleasant grassy strand. Putting to sea on the 21st the ships soon ran into a thick mist and were forced to anchor; the mist continuing they were not able to set sail till eleven the next morning. On Friday the Isle of Man was sighted and

[1] Queen Mary has left on record in the pages of her *Diary* and her tender and touching letter to the King in Ireland, her anxiety and distress of mind on this occasion. Dalrymple, iii.

they continued with fair weather and a moderate wind, which freshened considerably as they reached the north of the island, "making the yacht dance." Early on Saturday morning the mountains and coasts of Ireland came into view, and sailing on in the keen morning air they reached the Bay of Carrickfergus, where they anchored before midday opposite the White House, where all the transport was unloaded.[1] The King and his party landed and took horse for Belfast. They were met near the White House by General Schomberg and continued the journey in his coach. Belfast at this time was a small Scottish settlement of about three hundred houses. The King and his immediate following were lodged in a large house belonging to Sir John Franklin. It was in much disorder, built in the antique style, and adorned with what to Dutch eyes seemed some very bad paintings. There were some gardens, but like all else in this unhappy country they were fallen into disorder and neglect.

"There were to be seen a great crowd of people, men, women and children, having hardly anything round their bodies and very sickly looking, more so than I had ever seen in any country, the houses are also uncommonly dirty and bad."[2]

William himself was anxious to give battle to the enemy immediately, and many of those by whom he was surrounded were equally eager; the veteran Schomberg, however, counselled delay, "que de cela l'on avait mesme eschauffé la teste au Roy," he said, holding it imprudent to take any risks at a point when failure would be so injurious to the King's prospects.

The enemy had been encamped at Dundalk, where James had arrived in person; he gradually fell back and took up an advantageous position on the rising ground south of the river Boyne, which falls into the sea at Drogheda. William continued his advance south to Hilborough. The day was very hot and dusty, and the King and a large party were entertained on the way at Lisburn by Marshal Schomberg, whose headquarters had been here. The landscape

[1] Huygens says that coming into the bay on the left-hand side were some tolerably good houses and two villages.

[2] Ibid.

seemed charming to eyes accustomed to the flats of West Holland. On Sunday, June 22 (July 2), the King continued his march to Loughbrickland, where a halt was to be made for the assembling of his forces. William was no sooner arrived there than he was in among the throng of them, and observed each regiment very critically with his keen soldier's eye, "which pleased the soldiers mightily." From thence the route to Newry, north of Carlingford Bay, was full of loose stones, large and small, not a tree was to be seen, nothing but brushwood with bogs and morasses into which horses and baggage slipped and from which they could only be extricated with difficulty. From Newry, which had been burnt by James the year before, the road to Dundalk was still worse, in many places only fifteen feet wide, with deep bogs on either side, thronged with horsemen, led horses, pack horses and carriages. The town of Dundalk had been sacked by James's followers (who had been directed to live on the country) and its inhabitants driven away, only a very few naked and starving wretches remained. The army camped a mile or two beyond the town. Scouting parties brought in intelligence that James had already left Ardee and was retreating on Drogheda.

The army reached Ardee to find that James had vacated it the morning before. The town, which seemed to have been tolerably well built, had been destroyed, and was, like all the rest of the country, depopulated, and the few inhabitants who remained half dead from hunger and misery.

The road to Drogheda was a little better and the country more level. The houses of the peasantry were in ruins; the foreigners wondered at the castles, whose fortress-like character, with very few and narrow windows, bore witness to the unsettled state of Ireland. The soldiers' talk was that James would stay and give battle, and about a mile and a half from Drogheda some high ground showed his army camped on the further side of the river Boyne. The position had been well chosen. James's forces have been estimated at about 30,000 men, but not more than a third of these, the French infantry and Irish cavalry, were of much account. The remainder, native Irish infantry, were not merely undisciplined, but notorious for their alacrity in running away. William's force amounted to about 36,000 men, about half of whom were English troops. Among the Dutch contingent were distinguished "Portland's Horse,"

Ginkel's cavalry and Solmes' infantry. There were besides Finns and Danes, Germans and French Huguenots, but discipline in this heterogeneous army was strictly maintained and marauding was punished without mercy.[1]

On the morning of June 29 William rode out to observe the camp of the enemy from the opposite hill, recklessly exposing himself to their view, when an incident occurred which very nearly altered the course of history, by striking down the man whose single will at this time animated Europe. For a cannon ball "graized upon the bank of the river and in the rising slanted upon the King's right shoulder, took a piece of his coat, and tore the skin and flesh. Mr. Coningsby (now one of the Lords Justices of Ireland), seeing his Majesty struck, rid up and put his handkerchief upon the place;" but the King made light of it, saying only, "It is a good thing that was no nearer,"[2] and adding to those by whom he was surrounded, "Why don't you go on, gentlemen?" "Messieurs pourquoy ne marchez vous pas?" He afterwards went to change his coat and get his shoulder dressed and then "rid about to see his army come in." The same evening orders were given to march at daybreak, every man with a green bough or sprig in his hat to distinguish him from the enemy. About midnight William rode by torchlight through his army for a last inspection. Early the next morning (June 30 (July 11)), Huygens was sent for to William's tent to seal a letter to the Queen, after which he took horse and rode out, while the secretary retired to the tent of a friend, there to consume strawberry syrup and water. Afterwards, making their way to a ruined church on higher ground above the camp, screened by a tree, they watched the progress of the battle below and saw the Irish foot waver and break and retreat, return again to the charge, and finally take to flight, while William, at the head of his men, continually exposed himself.

Briefly the plan of battle was that the army crossed the river in three divisions. Young Schomberg, assisted by Portland, was sent up the river to cross at the Bridge of Slane, and turn the Irish left flank. Lauzun, alarmed for the safety of the whole army, at the narrow passage between bogs at Duleek, took the French troops with him to oppose

[1] See Story's *Impartial History*. He was an eye-witness of the King's wound.

[2] "Dat diende niet nader," Huygens.

this movement, leaving only Irish to guard the river. William, commanding the cavalry left wing, crossed the river, not far above Drogheda, while Marshal Schomberg, commanding the centre, broke through after a sharp struggle at the fords of Old Bridge. The enemy's infantry ran away, and William coming up on the left flank, repulsed the cavalry attack, which was left unsupported; but in the contest Marshal Schomberg was killed. James, seeing that the fight was going against him, fled to Dublin, while Lauzun and his French troops covered the retreat of the routed army.

The death of the famous commander Schomberg was a serious loss to the victorious army. He alone of all the foreigners who followed in William's train was regarded by the suspicious English without jealousy or misgivings. He had resigned, for the sake of his religion, a great position in the service of Louis XIV., had been welcomed and valued by Brandenburg, and was known throughout Europe as a great soldier and a great gentleman. An old man in years, but young in physical vigour, he had once more drawn the sword to protect his religion, and had died in its defence. The pursuit was abandoned, for though "My Lord Portland was for sending 3000 horse with each a musqueteer behind him to fall upon them in the rear as they retreated, they who knew the nature of the ground said that it was impossible to make an orderly pursuit." [1]

A few days after the Battle of the Boyne William Bentinck found time to write an account of it to the Earl of Melville: [2]

"Du Camp à Bellharwy le 4 (14) de Juillet, 1690.

"Monsieur,

"You will have learned from the letter of Monsieur Hamilton the mercy that the Good God has vouchsafed to us, firstly in preserving the person and life of the King from so dangerous a shot as that of the cannon by which he has been wounded, and then by giving him a so signal victory over his enemies by the gain of a battle, where in

[1] Story. See also his account of the death of Schomberg.

[2] In an earlier letter, April 22, 1690, Lord Portland says to Melville: "Je suis bien marri d'estre obligé de vous escrire en François je n'en ay que la langue."—*Leven and Melville Papers*. For map of Portland's Quarters, see British Museum Add. MS. 38146.

spite of so severe a wound thousands of witnesses will proclaim abroad with what vigour and courage he has acted, and how much the success of this great day for the Protestant interest is solely due after God to him. I send you enclosed a copy of the account of what has taken place, in which I have omitted many particulars which you will understand better from others, since from me they would seem flatteries, the manner in which the enemy has been beaten and the loss that they have suffered have so terrified them that their whole army, such of it as has remained together, has marched all night to the gates of Dublin ; they have also left this place without either burning or pillaging, dispersing all over the country, King James retiring with a troop of his guards towards the West of Ireland. There is only the French Corps with which Mons. de Lauzun retired which remained together. In Drogheda they left a garrison of three thousand men, when the King sent a detachment to attack it ; but they surrendered on condition of life and liberty to go away without arms and baggage. Yesterday the King marched with his army to this place 9 miles from Dublin where a great number of Protestants of the said town have come to meet him shedding tears of joy ; I do not doubt, Monsieur, that the same Divine Providence to which he owes such success, and far beyond our expectation, will assist you also to achieve what you have in hand for the same cause ; I believe that men's minds will be much calmed and that our most inveterate enemies will be in despair at this moment at not being believed faithful and loyal subjects of the King.

" P.S.—I forgot, Sir, to tell you that the wound of the King, which is about as large as a hand, suppurates very well, and is in the best condition that one could wish ; all the inconvenience that he has had from it is that in the fight he was obliged to use his sword with his left hand, and thank God he is better than he has been for two years."

James meanwhile, on reaching Dublin, summoned the principal Roman Catholic inhabitants to the Castle, and

in a valedictory address reviled them for their cowardice and declared he would never again command an Irish army; a reproach that came ill from the lips of a leader who had set the example of flight. He then hastened to Waterford, and shortly afterwards embarked for France. Lauzun and Tyrconnel also evacuated the city with what remained of their army, and retreated to the South of Ireland. William advanced towards Dublin. His wound, the reaction from the excitement of the battle, the loss of his friend and comrade in arms, Schomberg, must all have combined to produce a feeling of great weariness, for in the late afternoon of Saturday, July 5, when only three miles from the city, the King turned aside to rest and sleep. Bentinck, ever watchful for his master's comfort, was near at hand, and seeing the Secretary Huygens close by, asked him to sit near him on some empty boxes while he waited for the arrival of his baggage, which with the rest was very late, for it was towards sundown; and related to him and some others who were at hand all he had done and seen in the battle.

The King entered Dublin on Sunday, July 6, and returned thanks to God in the cathedral. At Finglas he halted for two days, July 7 and 8, and reviewed his army regiment by regiment, sitting on horseback, in the midst of heavy showers. It was noticed that the men were suffering from sore lips with the heat and dust of the march, and that the King himself had not escaped. Of "Portland's Horse" three hundred and fifty-seven answered to the roll call, of whom six were unmounted.

From Dublin William marched south as far as Limerick, where only the Irish, commanded by Sarsfield, remained, Lauzun having withdrawn his French troops. On the march south, Bentinck wrote again to Lord Melville from the camp at Carrick-on-Suir, north of Waterford. Huygens describes the camp as being pitched in a pleasant park before a house belonging to Lord Ormond and inhabited by his great-great-uncle, one of the Butlers, an old man of eighty and a Papist. It looked immediately upon the river Suir, and it was said that salmon could be caught from the kitchen windows and put straightway into the fish kettle. At any rate the soldiers caught and ate excellent small trout in the river.[1]

The danger of invasion on the English south coast,

[1] Huygens, 310, who returned to London.

which was still threatened by Tourville, and the defeat of Waldeck at Fleurus, called for the King's return. The decisive blow had been struck in Ireland, but Lord Melville was still anxious about a French invasion of Scotland, and Lord Portland wrote to him : [1]

"Sir,—I own I was surprised at that you did me the honour to write to me, as well as at your letters to the King, seeing that since the success that the Good God of His mercy has given to these arms you have more apprehension of a descent and invasion by the enemy than heretofore. I believe that the presence of his Majesty in England will somewhat calm these terrors. He will leave in two days with some regiments of cavalry and infantry, who will set out beforehand towards Dublin in order to embark as soon as possible. You will do well, Sir, to send someone to Chester to await the King there in order to inform his Majesty of the position of affairs in Scotland. I do not understand how you should wish to make M. Mackay return.[2]

"Our affairs thank God are going on well. Waterford capitulates and should be returned this evening to its allegiance to the King. There only remains a little fort called Duncannon at the mouth of the river, which cannot hold out, after which we shall have our wake clear and will march straight on Limerick to attack the enemy if they give opposition ; we must be entirely master of the river Shannon. I hope affairs in Scotland will be regulated to some extent by these, if there is not an insurrection in England."

The capitulation of Waterford, followed a few hours later by the surrender of the fort of Duncannon, furnished William with a safe haven on the southern coast. He had expressed his concern for the fate of the women and children within its walls if he were forced to take the town by assault.

[1] From the camp of Carrick, July 23 (August 2), 1690. French original published in the *Leven and Melville Papers*.

[2] There were those who found Mackay tenacious and impracticable, and elsewhere Lord Portland says : "I am sorry Mr. Mackay does not better satisfy the men of your country. He is very faithful to the King and understands war better than anyone you have there."

It appears from this letter that the King intended to leave Bentinck in Ireland till after the reduction of Limerick, returning himself by way of Chester, as he had come. When he learnt, however, that Tourville had contented himself with landing a detachment to burn Teignmouth, he resolved to follow the army to Limerick, where his presence was very necessary, sending to England at the same time a number of troops, cavalry and infantry, which he expected to follow in fourteen days, having first made himself master of the river Shannon. The King found this scheme of reducing the country impracticable. The Irish stood at bay at Limerick under the command of Sarsfield, who organised a clever and audacious raid, by which the convoy bringing up the artillery was surprised, and the guns and ammunition buried and exploded. Towards the end of August the heavy rains made it imperative to raise the siege. If he had not done so, William wrote to Waldeck, it would have been impossible to withdraw his artillery along roads already deep in mire. He sailed from Waterford Harbour early in September, leaving Bentinck to follow. Bentinck himself had written to his brother-in-law, Nyenhuys, in London to say that it rained so continually they must raise the siege. There are three short letters of this date, two written when William was about to sail and one to announce his safe arrival at Bristol :

"Dongannon fort, 15 (5) September, at 10 in the morning.

"You judged rightly in your letter from Clonmel that I received this morning that the strong and unfavourable wind has prevented our setting sail ; the wind is at present favourable but so strong that I do not know if we shall set sail to-day. Mr. R. Soutwell [1] has sent Clerk what is necessary in the way of provisions, so you see if the Good God grant us a little favourable weather the army will not want bread."

The King expresses fears that the fleet may have suffered in the tempest, and adds "the defeat of the Duke of Savoy [2] is a terrible setback for the public good."

[1] Sir Robert Southwell was Secretary of State for Ireland.

[2] *Savoy.* Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy, though ostensibly neutral, had been secretly negotiating with the Emperor. Louis XIV.'s suspicions were aroused and he sent Catinat with an army into Piedmont. Huygens notes on September 7 that letters from France brought news that the Duke of Savoy was completely defeated by Catinat. See also Luttrell.

Shortly afterwards the King wrote again that the wind was favourable and he was sailing.[1] The voyage from Waterford to the Bristol Channel seems to have occupied about two days, from the date of the following letter:

"September 7 (17). Près de Bristol.

"I landed here at a house of Mr. Robert Southwell, having had a very favourable passage, although there was a very great wind I have only been a little incommoded, and am at present, thank God, very well."

It will be Wednesday before he can reach Kensington, William adds, where he hopes Bentinck will arrive a few days later.

There was a good deal of discussion about the siege of Limerick in London. Huygens notes that

"Gastigny was with me and drank chocolate, boasting loudly about the advice he had given over the siege of Limmerick, and the method of attack; also over the loss of the canon, which he had predicted and had disputed violently about it with Myl. Portland and the King."[2]

The date of Bentinck's return is uncertain, but he arrived to find his master at the height of one of the brief spells of popularity by which the English manifested their gratitude to him after he had achieved some signal success. The Court at Kensington was thronged by those who wished to offer their congratulations. Sir William Lockhart, writing to Melville on September 13, says, "I have att last spoke with the King, but att no lenth. Never was man so cruded as he hath been since he cam. . . . My Lord Portland is com'd over and will be at Kensentown to-morrow."

William's intention had been to go to Holland as soon as possible. Apart from all affairs of State, he must have longed to revisit his own country. Talking one morning to Huygens about this time, of those who had died during his absence from Holland, he said, "We shall no longer know Holland when we see it again, neither will they know us," to which the Secretary replied diplomatically that he

[1] The King left the government of Ireland in the hands of three Lords Justices, one of whom was Henry Sidney. The conduct of the war was entrusted to Ginkel.

[2] The loss was attributed to Portland's negligence by the younger Schomberg.

would indeed find that otherwise when he came among a crowd of men. "Yes," said the King, "isn't that so? Oh me I dread it!"

William Bentinck's connection with Scotland has already been mentioned, and his handling of the Scottish business that passed through his hands was not wholly fortunate. Some aspects of it increased the distrust and suspicion with which many in England regarded him. Scottish affairs at this period are complicated and difficult to follow, for here the bitterness of party faction was enhanced by violent religious passions. Bentinck's friend and correspondent, Lord Melville, "an easy man," obnoxious neither to Episcopalians nor moderate Presbyterians, was appointed to the influential post of Secretary. General Mackay was sent down to take command of the troops. Burnet, with an admirably detached view for a Bishop, says of Mackay that he was

"a general officer that had served long in Holland with great reputation, and who was the most pious man that I ever knew, in a military way. He was one of the best officers of the age, when he had nothing to do but to obey and execute orders; for he was both diligent, obliging and brave; but he was not fitted to command. [One can imagine that to be "obliging" would be the last quality desirable in a soldier.] His piety made him too apt to mistrust his own sense, and to be too tender, or rather too fearful where there might be a needless effusion of blood."

It was necessary, however, for Bentinck to warn Lord Melville on more than one occasion very urgently that he must work amicably and in accord with General Mackay. Before sailing for Ireland he had written:

"Hoylake, 9 June, 1690.[1]

"Sir,

"I have recently asked Mr. Carstairs[2] to speak to you concerning General Major Mackay, whom you know to be a very honest man and very zealous for the service of the King our master, who relies entirely on him for military affairs. It is very necessary, Sir, that you should be on

[1] Translated from the *Leven and Melville Papers*.
[2] Presbyterian Chaplain to their Majesties for Scotland.

good terms with him, that is to say that you show him confidence, that you discuss affairs with him, and that you lend all possible assistance. I assure you that it is of very great importance, since the King approves his design, that it should be executed as soon as possible, in order that he may be returned in a few days, both to guard the repose of Scotland and the frontiers of England during the absence of the King, who only awaits a good wind to embark under the Divine Protection. I assure you that it is not only necessary for the service of the King, but it also concerns your own interest. You know that you have enemies enough in your country. For me, I shall always be among your friends, but I pray you to follow this counsel."

The appointment of Melville was regarded as a personal injury by the abler but untrustworthy Sir James Montgomery, who returned to Scotland a venomous and disappointed man. He became the leader of the malcontents, and exercised his not inconsiderable abilities in fomenting ill-feeling against the Government and the King. Subsequently he entered into an alliance with the Jacobite agents Neville Payne and Simpson Jones. William Bentinck, with all his native shrewdness, now became the dupe of these two Jacobite emissaries. Payne gained Bentinck's ear, convinced him that he was in the King's interest, and artfully imbued his mind with suspicions of some of the men who were most loyal to William. Bentinck, it appears, allowed it to be seen that he was impressed by the spy's reports. Then by underground methods the loyal men whom the reports concerned became aware that they were suspected, and were led to believe that the Court was seeking evidence against them.

Associated with Montgomery were his brother-in-law Lord Annandale, and Lord Ross. The next year, 1690, coming up to London they sought to avail themselves of the general feeling of insecurity among English Jacobites to bring about a rapprochement between them and the Episcopal party in Scotland.

The real conspirators asked that troops for Scotland should be sent from Dunkirk. Bentinck was informed of this by Simpson. He demanded witnesses. Simpson then warned the conspirators that they were discovered, and that

great rewards were offered for whoever should turn King's evidence. Many of them had no knowledge of the full scope of the plot to restore James, and so an idea spread that there was to be a new era of sham plots, like that of Titus Oates, a dread which not unnaturally produced a general distrust of the King and his Government.

Montgomery exerted all his ingenuity to inflame this belief and to enhance Bentinck's unpopularity. The Earl of Monmouth [1] spoke in guarded terms of this to Burnet, but for some time William and his best friends could not be convinced of the danger. At last Burnet received a visit from Montgomery's brother, who revealed the existence of the plot and the fact that the zealous Simpson was a Jacobite agent. An invitation to James was to be sent to France viâ Flanders. Still the King was incredulous and told Burnet to report to Shrewsbury. Burnet did so, having learned from Montgomery's brother that the papers for France were to be entrusted to one Williamson. Now Shrewsbury had already been solicited by this man for a pass for Flanders, and he was vouched for by men whose good faith it would have been impolitic to appear to doubt. Williamson was seized at Dover, but a careful search revealed nothing at all.

The whole occurrence was most unfortunate. It encouraged the conspirators, made the Court look foolish, and gave colour to all that was being said. It was not known till afterwards that the astute Simpson had kept all the papers in his own hands, and had taken horse for Dover, where he proposed to meet Williamson. Arrived there he found him already in custody, and made off to Deal, whence he hired a boat for France. Subsequently the leaders quarrelled with their associates, and fearing to be betrayed by them hurried to London to secure their own safety by timely confession. This was after William and Bentinck had sailed for Ireland. Lord Ross was the first to confess all the plans of the conspiracy to the Queen, and was sent to the Tower. Montgomery followed suit, Annandale surrendered later on.[2]

These occurrences explain the almost peevish tone of William Bentinck's letter to Lord Melville :

[1] Charles Mordaunt, 2nd Viscount Mordaunt, Earl of Monmouth, 1689, one of the Council of Nine appointed to advise the Queen during William's absence in Ireland. "Lord Monmouth is mad," she wrote of him.

[2] See Mary's letters to William quoted in Dalrymple, iii., *Leven and Meville Papers*, and Burnet.

"November 29. Sir, I have so strictly abstained from Scottish affairs since last winter, and I so much apprehend being suspected of meddling in them that I did not wish to write a single letter in this country during the whole session of Parliament. This is the reason that I have not replied to that you did me the honour to write me. Otherwise I should not have failed to thank you and to testify, Sir, the esteem and consideration that I always have for you," etc.[1]

So the year 1690 drew to a close. Anxious as the King was to return to Holland, where a Congress of the Allies was to meet during the winter to discuss ways and means of carrying on the war, he was obliged to remain in England for an autumn session of Parliament, which voted him liberal sums for this purpose. At last the longed-for time arrived. The King was profoundly moved at the thought of again returning to his native land after more than two years' absence. His great enterprise had indeed succeeded, but it had borne bitter fruit in mistrust and vexation of spirit. Shortly before he started Huygens, going in to him to take down his correspondence, found him thoughtful and preoccupied. He did not sign it, but talked of his coming journey, and said that it seemed to him like a dream that he would probably be at the Hague within eight days.[2]

William, accompanied by Bentinck, embarked at Margate on January 6 (16), but the wind changing, they were obliged to return to London. Ten days later, the wind being again westerly, the King and Bentinck and Ouwerkerk drove to Gravesend and there took ship. Next morning the whole fleet of twenty-three sails weighed anchor, as there was every prospect of a quick and favourable passage.

In Holland people knew otherwise. Here the frost had not given way and the coasts were so encumbered with ice that even the fishermen hardly dared venture out. At the Hague it was held to be impossible that the King could be expected within the next fourteen days. Throughout January 17 the wind was favourable, but towards evening it veered to the north-east. The next day Captain

[1] Translated from *Leven and Melville Papers*.

[2] On the eve of the King's departure a dangerous Jacobite conspiracy to restore James II. was discovered, and its leader, Lord Preston, arrested, December 1690.

Hartevelt [1] hoisted a signal summoning the Captains of the fleet, owing to the danger of being driven into Dunkirk and falling into French hands. The general consensus of opinion was in favour of returning to England. The King refused and Hartevelt believed a change possible, which might enable them to reach Ostend later. The fleet lay by, but morning broke with a thick mist. They weighed anchor and kept to an easterly course ; the next day (Thursday, January 20) the decreasing depth of the water betokened their approach to land, but landing was found to be very difficult owing to ice. William, however, decided to avail himself of the calm to effect a landing in the rowing sloop. He descended into it with Bentinck, Ouwerkerk, Dorset and a servant, with a crew of seven English oarsmen. Hartevelt steered. They took the precaution of putting on board some provisions and compasses, hoping soon to reach land. At two o'clock in the afternoon the sloop left the yacht, and was lost to sight in the fog. Two other boats followed from the fleet. The men bent to their oars, the boat proceeded rapidly. Hartevelt believed them to be close on shore, but they now encountered a deep icefield—the compass showed them to be before the Gat of Goeree. William wished to land at Helvoetsluis. They continued their course, but the ice-floe drove too heavily against them.

Perilous as their situation had now become, the mist and the gathering darkness decided Hartevelt against attempting to regain the fleet, in response to the advice of the men in the other boats. The King, meanwhile, was in consultation with Portland. In reply to their questions Captain Hartevelt advised that a course should be directed towards Goeree, as the ice was less to be feared there on account of the nature of the cliffs. Even so the shores were so encumbered that they failed to make the harbour. Later the same evening, however, they descried the beacon of Goeree between eight and nine o'clock.

Hartevelt sent three men ashore to fetch carriages, but they returned shortly, saying it was impossible to make their way across the broken ice and water-holes. After midnight the rising tide floated the boat again, the crew attempted, in spite of the darkness, to find the entrance to the harbour. They recalled the fact that on another January

[1] Symon Hartevelt was the skipper who brought William III. over in 1688. His report of the journey was printed by Sylvius, iii. 31.

night two years before, another King of England had been afloat at no great distance from where they were in such another small boat.

They were now able to row towards the flat shore, in water only two or three feet in depth, but the mist and darkness prevented them from finding the harbour. Hartevelt begged leave to get out and work his way ashore. The King gave it unwillingly. After two weary hours he reached Goeree. There he ordered the beacon to be increased and a shot to be fired as a signal for the sloop. The King understood and said, "He will come again with carriages to fetch us." Between five and six o'clock in the morning (January 21 (31)) the carriages reached the sloop, and an hour later, in the grey of the dawn, they arrived at the nearest dwelling, a farmhouse. Here a fire was soon crackling on the hearth and the farmer brought forth whatever his house afforded. But the right shore of the Maas had still to be reached, and at nine o'clock, when Hartevelt declared the tide to be favourable for embarking, the carriages brought the travellers back to the sloops. They rowed along the shore, this time, however, by daylight, and so reached the mouth of the Maas and crossed to the Orange-Polder.

On the outer edge of the Orange-Polder dyke was the house of a servant called Jilles, where William had often been when hunting hares. On the rumour that the King was perhaps coming, the faithful Jilles set himself to keep a look-out on his own account. At midday the occupants of the sloop descried two horsemen ashore watching with astonishment the progress of an open boat in the ice-drift of the Maas. Hartevelt held his course towards the horsemen, and one of them, grasping the significance of this, spurred his horse into the freezing water and reached the first sloop. From one of the heavily cloaked men there reached him a hoarse, scarcely recognisable voice, "How goes it, Jilles? Do you still know me?" Whereupon Jilles, somewhat taken aback, exclaimed artlessly, "Welcome, My Lord Prince, I did not see that it was you."

The King mounted the horse of the second rider, while Bentinck bestrode that of Jilles. They rode on to dry land. Jilles waded ashore in order to bring back the horses, and continued to do so till the whole party were landed. In all they had spent twenty-three hours in the sloops. The

King went to Jilles's house ; its owner he sent to the neighbouring Honslaerdyck to fetch carriages. Wood was plentiful, and the King's followers crowded round the blazing fire. Not so the King. He wished to be alone. There was no other place except the cow-stall, built in the Dutch fashion, opening into the living-room and under the same roof, clean and well kept as only a Dutch stable can be. Here the King withdrew, and spent the time of waiting pacing up and down along the plank which formed a pathway between the two rows of stalls. At this moment even William Bentinck left his master alone.

The arrival of the carriages enabled the King and his suite to continue their journey. Towards evening they reached the Hague, where the entry of a coach and six gave the first intelligence of the King's return. The news spread quickly through the city. It was hardly believed till the cannon sounded from the Orange Hof. All doubt was at an end. The King was returned safe and sound. The people illuminated their houses and ran out into the streets, rejoicing, to learn all that was to be known, while the air above was filled with the clangour of the bells in thanksgiving to the Giver of all Good, and the sound was carried over the flat country to far-off villages telling them that while William lived his people were secure. It was only with reluctance that their Prince consented to gratify his people's wishes by making a public entry into the Hague, and the hearty and spontaneous affection by which all classes testified their delight at having him once more among them should have made the day one of the happiest in his arduous and troubled life.[1]

He afterwards attended a sitting of the States-General. He had accepted the throne, he told them, " not without untold searchings of heart," and he concluded, " I hope that God will use me as his instrument for the establishment of the peace of Europe and the security of this State."

The representatives of the Allies were already assembling at the Hague.[2] When the Congress met, William, in a

[1] A contemporary gives a curious detail of the manners of the time. In church everyone turned towards their Prince with their backs to the Minister. William had never been more genial, he remembered everyone and walked in the Voorhout as in times past. Jaucourt. Droste, ii. p. 530 (1691).

[2] The actual belligerent Powers were the members of the Grand Alliance. The Emperor, the King of England, the King of Spain, the Republic of the Netherlands, the Duke of Savoy. Individual Princes of the Empire made their own terms with the principal belligerent Powers.

presidential address, urged upon them the perils of delay and disunion in the face of so powerful an enemy as France. The Imperial declaration of war on France involved individual Princes of the Empire only in sending a contingent to join the Imperial arms. The rest of their troops were hired out among the Allies, on such terms as Bentinck was able to make in his mission to Germany in 1688. His offices had again been requisitioned in the same cause in the two previous years. Almost directly the new Government was established in England, Frederick, Elector of Brandenburg, sent his Ambassador, Count Schmettau, with a request for subsidies. Commissioned by the King, Bentinck replied that he who expects subsidies from England does not know this country. It was altogether unreasonable that one member of a Coalition should ask money from another, where each one must still contribute according to his powers in defence of the common danger. It would, nevertheless, have been impolitic to have definitely replied in the negative. The Brandenburgers were too good soldiers, and their presence too important to the common cause. Portland, therefore, did not entirely repudiate the suggestion. Only the word "subsidies," he said, must remain in abeyance. Parliament could not grant subsidies to foreign powers, for if once a precedent were made, then all the other Allies would make the same request. If anything were to be attained it was through the King personally, but in any case not till after the successful conclusion of the Irish campaign. At the beginning of 1690 Brandenburg made a fresh attempt again through the mediation of Bentinck. He declared he was putting 20,000 men into the field and received from other sources scarcely enough to cover the expenses of 6000. After long negotiations between Schmettau and Nottingham, a treaty was concluded on terms satisfactory to the Elector.[1] The difficulties with other individual members of the Coalition, their treachery, their greed, their lack of statesmanlike perception of the position, their impotence, are matters of common history.

[1] *Terms of Treaty.* Under the form of renewing an old Alliance of 1661, a secret article was introduced in which King and Elector promised each other in case of attack immediate help with 6000 men. The help might be given in a money equivalent. May 1690.

Brandenburg was at the same time making terms with Gastanaga, and yet complaining at the Hague that he could not remain armed for more than a year because of the expense, "which nobody believed." Imperial Ambassador Windischgrätz. Klopp, v. 240 *seq.*

The Emperor, indeed, William seems to have valued and trusted, but the Emperor was still handicapped by the Turkish war.

At last the King was free to escape to Loo and forget the cares of State in hunting. But Louis XIV. was not going to allow the impression produced on Europe by the Hague Congress to remain undisputed. The drawbacks to a Coalition became almost immediately apparent.[1] While William could only achieve his ends by lengthy and difficult negotiations with principals as far apart as Berlin and Brussels, Turin and Vienna, Louis XIV. with all his resources at his command could accomplish immediately. He now concentrated his forces on the important frontier fortress of Mons in the Spanish Netherlands. Luxemburg was in command. Louis was present in person. William had hardly had time to begin to enjoy his hunting at Loo, in March weather as soft and mild as June, when the news was brought to him there that Mons was besieged. He wrote to Heinsius the same day, March 18 : " You can easily imagine, although I am not much surprised by it, how chagrined I am by this news, knowing the importance of the place and the extraordinary difficulties in the way of succouring it." He gave directions for hastening troops there from Germany. Waldeck was already on his way with such forces as could be assembled. William Bentinck was dispatched to the Viceregal Court at Brussels to attempt to galvanise Gastanaga, the Governor of the Netherlands, into something like activity in the preparation of transport and the concentration of the troops under his command. He returned to Breda on the evening of the 27th, where William had already arrived in very cold weather. It was perhaps on Bentinck's report that William wrote to Heinsius that the Spanish themselves now begin to be of opinion that it would be altogether too hazardous to attempt to relieve Mons. The King and his

[1] Spain's ill-timed niggardliness to Hanover, said William to the Imperial Ambassador Windischgrätz, had opened their land to the enemy by the withdrawal of the Hanoverian troops. Klopp, v. 257. William also commented on the advantage to Louis XIV. of being able to dispose of everything as he pleased, whereas he had to do " mit vielen Köpfe." Sweden was seeking to form a third party and draw away Hanover, as well as the Elector of Saxony, the King added, besides which he believed that there were traitors among them, who reported everything said at the Congress to Versailles, and he earnestly urged upon the Emperor peace with Turkey so that the burden of the war might not continue to fall on Holland and England.

advisers were occupied in earnest and continual consultation; now Bentinck is conferring with his master and Nottingham over the suggested disposition of Imperial and Bavarian mercenary forces; now he sends for the Secretary Huygens and gives him the King's orders for the drafting of letters, which the King signs himself after dinner. An evening or two later, the Secretary coming in to bring the King's letters, found Bentinck with him and Count van Solmes very earnestly and softly talking together, sometimes looking long at one another without speaking. This little scene, artlessly described by a rather dull and unobservant man, gives an extraordinary impression of the strained and anxious deliberation of those critical days. This was at Halle, to which they had travelled viâ Antwerp and Brussels, where it was said the King had been recently entertained by Gastanaga. Gastanaga, by virtue of his inertia, was the most unmanageable of all the pawns with which William had to play his intricate game. As Governor of the Netherlands his position was all-important—here was the main theatre of the great war, yet he calmly awaited the upshot of events, neglecting even such elementary precautions as providing forage and transport for the allied army; the fall of Mons was generally attributed to his omission to carry out his undertaking of "furnishing carriages to the army." [1] The allied forces were encamped at Halle, whence heavy firing could be heard; but bad as was the news from Mons, the army was unable to advance for lack of forage.[2] William, writing to Heinsius on April 7, from the camp at Halle, says:

"All the troops arrived the day before yesterday, and we should have been in a position to advance yesterday or to-day, which I had resolved to do, but examining what we at least stood in need of, oats for the horses and bread for the men to take with us, I found to my great astonishment that there were not wagons enough to transport it. This would create a delay of several days—by which time I fear that it will be too late," for to all appearances it would be impossible Mons could hold out so long. "You can easily imagine how great chagrin this causes me. The loss of that place will bring the cause of this country into confusion so that

[1] Burnet. [2] Huygens, April 7, 1691.

I almost despair of a means of maintaining it . . . and the Northern Crowns [Denmark and Sweden] will become unmanageable. One must, however, do one's best and leave the result in God's hands."

On April 9 came the news of the capitulation of Mons. William and his entourage returned immediately to Holland and prepared for their journey to England. Huygens learned that they would sail as soon as the wind was in the right quarter on his return to the Hague. The next day, April 19, he was sent for by the King to "Portland's quarters," where he was busy with the orders for embarkation to be given to Bentinck. Huygens asked the King for one for himself. William replied genially, "where would you like to be?" "My Lord Nottingham will give out the tickets," interrupted Bentinck.

A prosperous voyage brought them back to Gravesend late on the 22nd. In England the Government were still occupied in bringing tardy justice to the traitors concerned in Preston's Plot. Preston himself turned King's evidence and named as his accomplices Clarendon, Dartmouth, Bishop Turner, and William Penn the Quaker. The too great magnanimity with which they were treated soon encouraged the Jacobites to further efforts. The day after his return, on April 23, Bentinck was at a stately entertainment given by Lord Montague to the King, who went informally in Sidney's coach to Montague House to dine there.[1] Besides Portland and the faithful Sidney, many other of the most important men of affairs were there; Ormond, who had deserted to William's side with George of Denmark, and been with him at the Boyne; Dorset, who had been accused by Preston of complicity in the recent Jacobite plot, an accusation that the King had refused to hear; the wavering Shrewsbury; the Earl of Monmouth, who as Charles Mordaunt had been among one of the earliest volunteers to join William at the Hague; Marlborough, who was already meditating a deeper treachery than that of which he had been already guilty; Sidney Godolphin, Chief Commissioner of the Treasury, whose eminent financial abilities were matched only by his capacity for treacherous dissimulation, and who, like Marlborough, had already made his position secure in

[1] Luttrell, ii. p. 215.

any event.[1] How curious an atmosphere for a convivial gathering, what dissimulation, and what secret knowledge of one another these men had! It did not behove a King who had to govern by means of them to be aware of too much.

The sojourn in England was a very brief one. By May 13 the King was back at the Hague, and thence went to Loo, May 19, for some hunting in very cold weather, the icy winds and hailstorms of a Dutch spring, against his doctor's advice. He was in bad health, but perhaps thought this the best preparation for the fatigue and mental strain of the coming campaign. Bentinck was there at least part of the time, and Sidney as well as Marlborough, whose treachery was still unsuspected, though James was expecting that he was about to avail himself of his position as a Commander in Flanders to desert with his men.[2] On the 31st the news that the French were besieging Halle compelled William to make all haste to the Flanders front. In the midst of these preparations Bentinck was so far exasperated as to box the ears of the Town Commissary, who had left in confusion the business of providing the Royal horses.[3] The King hastened to Anderlech, from the towers of which the enemy could be seen through field-glasses retiring from Halle. The Court was lodged here in the house of the Lord of Bellaert, and William Bentinck, as Huygens notes, was allotted a room looking out on the gardens that had once been occupied by Erasmus. The campaign was spent in marches and countermarches, tedious to relate and ineffective in results, for Luxemburg skilfully avoided an engagement by manœuvres which were rendered possible by the nature of the country with narrow passes among hills and woods.[4]

At times the King could find accommodation only in some poor farmhouse, while everyone else was under canvas. His activity and watchfulness were unceasing. So much called for his personal presence and attention. Provisioning the army was difficult. The French had burnt much forage, as Bentinck reported to the King early in August. He was continually occupied with or for his master in these months, in the hot August weather, and on more than one occasion, having bidden Huygens and others to dine in his tent, was

[1] For details of their perfidy, see Clarke's *Life of James II.*, vol. ii. p. 444.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 449.
[3] Huygens.
[4] See report of Stratemann, who succeeded Windischgrätz as Imperial Ambassador in the field. Klopp, v. 289

forced to excuse himself as the King required his presence at Headquarters, and the guests dined without their host. Sometimes they were unpleasantly within reach of the enemy's fire, as at Beaumont, where Huygens found the King sitting under a high tree not far from the gate and received directions to find quarters within the town. This he did, at the "Prince de Raches" hard by the market, a very bad inn where he slept in his nightgown on straw for fear of fleas. It was here that, when the enemy began to fire at the Spanish on the left wing, Huygens, who was possessed of a kind of timorous curiosity, and had gone out to see what was to be seen, heard a shot pass about fifteen feet above his head, and beat a hasty retreat. The same evening they were on the road again. "The King had been chagrined this day," says Huygens. A day or two later, taking a map that had been sent for in to the King, William turned over its pages, and looking at France said, "That is a rich country that, that is a good land." Bentinck responded that it was now exhausted. "Yes," replied the King, "but it will recover again."

In September the army retired into winter quarters; by the 23rd the King was again at Loo, and later at Dieren, where he shot and fished and hunted with his friends, and where Bentinck was sent to call Huygens out of his bed to write an important letter to Dykvelt.

Though little in the way of definite achievement was to be counted to the Allies on any front in the campaign of 1691 against France, the first crisis of the war was now over. The reduction of Ireland had established William on the throne; as King of England he held the scales, and the balance dipped in his favour. Moreover, the death of the great French Minister Louvois (who had advocated the prolongation of war) and the victory of the Imperial arms over the Turks in August,[1] were both gains to the allied cause.

It was about this time that those by whom William was surrounded began to note the rise to favour of a page in his service called Joust van Keppel, and Huygens notes (February 20, 1691):

"This evening I was with the King, who was disturbed because the page Keppel having been out hunting with him

[1] At Salankeman, August 19, 1691.

had fallen with his horse and broken his leg. He pitied him and said, 'He is such a good boy, he endured terrible pain.'"

To some extent Huygens explains the rise of this new favourite. He shows William in a quite different light from the morose, unbending genius of history, the earnest man of affairs of the Heinsius letters, or the tender and devoted friend revealed by the Bentinck correspondence. He had yet another side. He liked to unbend, he had the Dutchman's interest in little things. Huygens, careful and unimaginative chronicler, continually records little sayings and jokes of the King. For instance, while they were in Flanders, Huygens, who valued his personal comfort and was accustomed to have parcels sent from home, received on one occasion a pair of stockings. Later the same day the Secretary noted :[1] "was with the King, who rallied me about a pair of stockings that had come by post, saying that he had been told they were silk stockings, and that he supposed I intended to make him a present of them." It was to this side of his character, his more convivial aspect, that the youth and foolish high spirits of Keppel appealed, his gaiety and audacity.

Towards the end of October the King returned to London in the yacht *Mary* in a south-east wind and very fine weather. Bentinck's household and servants were dispatched in an Admiralty yacht. William landed with Bentinck at Margate, where for some reason he was unexpected, and they were obliged to hire such poor carriages as could be got in the neighbourhood of the village, and so proceeded to Gravesend. On the way the King's carriage was overturned ; fortunately William, who was beneath Bentinck, escaped with only a slight injury to his arm. He was met by one of his own carriages, they had been sent out in all directions, as it was not known by what route he was travelling. He arrived in London at night, and passed through the city, which was illuminated to the roofs of the houses and filled with bonfires. Crowds in the street hindered the passage of the Royal carriage, and the windows were filled with spectators, for the most part in undress, owing to the late hour, shouting at the top of their voices and welcoming the King's return with extraordinary shouts of joy. The people

[1] Huygens.

accompanied him to Whitehall. "Where is the Queen?" he asked on the instant that the carriage door was opened, and hastening to her room he kissed her twice, afterwards returning to St. James's, where his supper was waiting for him.[1]

The King's return was celebrated by a ball of much magnificence. Nearly everyone had new dresses. It was said in the city that so many beautiful stuffs had not been sold for the last thirty years. More than half the ladies were unable to make their way into the ballroom. Only nine couples danced there, of whom the most beautiful was the little Lady Mary Bentinck. The Queen, good and kindly natured as she was, seems to have taken a special interest in these motherless children. In June, while his father was with the King in Flanders, Bentinck's son, Lord Woodstock, a sweet-tempered and handsome boy, was honoured by an office never before entrusted to one of his years, that of carrying the Sword of State before the Queen at a ceremonial attendance at church. Mary laughed heartily at the sight of the solemn and self-possessed air with which the boy acquitted himself.[2]

Soon after their return to England William proposed to make Bentinck a present of a collection of pictures that had belonged to Lord Melfort, one of the most influential and indiscreet of James II.'s counsellors at St. Germains. He was reputed to have a fine taste in pictures, and a collection of some merit at his house in the Rue des Petits Augustins in Paris. Huygens, who was frequently

[1] Part of the old Palace of Whitehall had been burnt down in April of this year.

The Whitehall Fire, 1691, April 10.

Evelyn.—"This night a sudden and terrible fire burnt down all the buildings over the Stone Gallery at Whitehall to the water-side, beginning at the apartment of the late Duchesse of Portsmouth, and consuming other lodgings of such leuwd creatures."

Luttrell, April 7.—"About 8 at night hapned a dismal fire at Whitehal, it began in the Duke of Gloucester's lodgings, late those of the Duchesse of Portsmouth, occasioned as said by the carelessness of a maid in burning off a candle from a bunch of candles and leaving the others lighted. Quickly set fire to the buildings and consumed the greater part of the Stone Gallery on both sides, that towards the privy garden and that towards the Thames wherein were the lodgings of Lord Devonshire Overkirk, etc. They blew up several times before it could be stopped."

Anthony à Wood says that the pile of buildings that were blown up included the lodgings of the Earl of Portland, and that he lost a casket of jewels valued at £6000.

[2] Denbigh MSS. Hist. MSS. Com. Report.

consulted by the King about the Royal pictures, was sent for by Bentinck on November 12 to his lodgings in Whitehall, where he found him entertaining Lord Rochester, the Duke of Norfolk, and Lord Scarborough at dinner. Bentinck and Huygens afterwards went together to visit Sir Francis Childe,[1] "near Goldsmith's Hall," where the confiscated pictures were to be seen. There proved to be nothing of special interest in the collection, the best thing there was a little piece by Bassano. The next day when Huygens was with the King, who was much troubled by his frequent cough, he was surprised and rather disappointed at the Secretary's report on the pictures. He believed, he said, that my Lord had had some good things by van Dyck.

Not long after this affair of the pictures, another fire broke out in the new Royal Palace of Kensington, again through the carelessness of a servant. A contemporary French account throws a surprising light on the neglect of any precautions in such cases. About 3.30 in the morning (November 23 (13)) William and Mary were awakened by several musket shots. They at first supposed a chimney to be on fire, but the Queen hearing other shots, rose and called a chambermaid. A moment later, the Earl of Essex, first gentleman of the bedchamber for the week, came to warn the King that the fire was in the gallery on the right-hand side. The King rose and saw that it was only a small affair, if it were put out within an hour. But there was in the house neither powder nor a ladder nor a pump. Lord Portland was obliged to send to Westminster and Whitehall to awaken men to come and help. It was six o'clock before a pump arrived. However, the King and Queen, seeing that the fire gained on their apartments, although slowly, and with a favourable wind, without any general confusion had their furniture moved into the garden.

"I[2] arrived towards 7 o'clock, at daybreak at Kinsington, where I saw the fire, which had only burnt the apartments of my Lord Devencher and my Lord Dorset, where nobody had been, and the apartments of the first gentleman, with

[1] One of the family of city magnates of that name and Sheriff for the year 1691. See Luttrell, ii. 259, for the account of the brawl between the benchers of the Inner Temple and the Alsatians, in which Sir Francis was involved in his official capacity.

[2] The anonymous narrator of the Denbigh MSS. Hist. Com. Report.

the pretty apartment of the concierge, who saved his effects, having known among the first of the beginning of the fire in the room of a neighbouring servant. I was in the garden, where I saw their Majesties in deshabille, with about a dozen people. A little fog inconvenienced them. Towards 8 o'clock the fire was extinguished. Carriages had been sent for at 6 o'clock to go to Whitehall, but they were sent away again. Their Majesties preferred to return to their own apartments, which were refurnished before midday. A great number of people were come to Kinsington. The King and Queen never laughed more than in recounting all that had passed during the night among the ladies in their chemises, who fled from fear, where there was no danger. Nothing was lost, not even the porcelain, which was arranged in the garden with the pictures and furniture. I saw the King walk about to see the bundles which each one had packed up. He found among them provisions of Dutch cheese, bottles and bread, as if one had been going to stand a siege. That amused him very much."

The beginning of the year 1692 was occupied by the discovery of the most serious Jacobite conspiracy that had yet occurred. For the first time the cynical indifference with which William treated the disaffected forsook him. The Jacobites had been greatly encouraged by the fall of Mons, coming as it did in reply to the Congress at the Hague and the extreme efforts of the Allies. Three of the most prominent men in William's service, Russell, Godolphin and Marlborough, had, during the past year, made their position safe in any case by means of Jacobite agents.[1] Russell was now Admiral of the Fleet, and his services had been munificently rewarded; Godolphin, First Commissioner of the Treasury, had received many marks of the King's confidence. Marlborough's treachery was prompted neither by the ill humour and greed of Russell nor by the crafty design of Godolphin of making his position secure in any event. To Marlborough James was only a tool, the Jacobites merely a pretext. When he promised to desert at the head of his troops it was not to put them at the service of the feeble

[1] See Clarke's *Life*, ii. p. 444. For Marlborough's treachery, Macpherson's *Original Papers*, i. 440, and Dalrymple, iii.

fugitive of St. Germains. The Princess Anne was entirely under the influence of Lady Marlborough. With Anne on the throne Marlborough would be virtually dictator.[1] Ambitious as the scheme sounds, it was by no means beyond the bounds of probability. He sought to avail himself of the jealousy and dislike of the Dutch, in Parliament and the army, by getting both Houses to move an address to the King asking him to dismiss all foreigners from his service, which would have confronted William with a very grave constitutional difficulty. Once rid of the King's foreign troops, Marlborough relied on the army's jealousy of the Dutch troops and his own popularity with it to support his schemes. He had indeed suggested to James that he could perhaps restore him without foreign intervention. He actively engaged all his great abilities in the prosecution of this scheme and in gaining adherents to it. What exactly happened has never transpired, but some of the most faithful Jacobites appear to have begun to suspect Marlborough's good faith. James II. wrote or caused to be written :[2]

"Some faithful indiscreet subjects, thinking to serve me and imagining that what Milord Churchill was doing was not for me but for the Princess of Denmark, had the imprudence to discover all to Benting and thus turned aside the coup."

That is all. Who it was that told Bentinck of this promising scheme does not appear. Burnet noted about this time that the King had said to him of Marlborough that he had very good reason to believe he had made his peace with King James and was engaged in a correspondence with France. It was besides notorious that animosity to the Dutch and the King was continually incited by Marlborough among the officers who congregated at his house. It appears from contemporary writers that the proofs of his perfidy

[1] Through the influence of Marlborough, Anne had written to her father craving his forgiveness. *Life of James II.*, vol. ii. p. 477.

[2] Macpherson. Clarke.

1692. A propos of Marlborough's Plot, Burnet* comments on the excellent discipline and conduct of the Dutch troops compared with that of the English, who were rude and exacting, especially those returning from Ireland "who had been so long in an enemy's country that they could not be soon brought to order." The people actually preferred the Dutch, which increased the hatred our soldiers bore them.

* Burnet, Harl. MSS.

rested upon a letter that was intercepted from France.[1] These were, however, so clear and convincing that William acted promptly and decisively. Marlborough was instantly dismissed from all his offices. Huygens was told unofficially that Marlborough's disgrace was due to the fact that the King having held a secret Council, he received news of what had passed at it from France and that "this Lord was known to have told his wife something about it." This bears out a still more explicit account, that when the Privy Council expressed astonishment at the sudden dismissal of Marlborough, William produced a letter from Lady Marlborough which had been delivered to him from a French source, giving information of the English plans for a landing. Obviously it was impossible for the King to disclose the names of Bentinck's friendly informants. Though the danger was averted, the incident had the most unfortunate effect. The cause of Marlborough's disgrace was not made public, its explanation was left to conjecture, and was attributed to many causes, among them to a quarrel between Mary and Anne, which arose from Anne's declining to be separated from the Marlboroughs although she was aware of the reason for his dismissal.[2] Unfortunately the exposure of a bogus Jacobite plot about the same time tended to throw discredit on the existence of a genuine one.

In his unpublished history Burnet wrote of this much-discussed quarrel between the sisters :

"The Queen had taken all possible means to gain her sister, and had left no means unessayed except the purchasing her favourite, which she thought below her to do . . . they studied to render themselves very popular, but with very ill success, for the Queen grew to be so universally beloved that nothing could stand against her in the affections of the nation."

And this account of the way in which Anne's quarrel with the Queen reacted on her is corroborated by Hoffmann, who reported in May 1692, that "The Princess has very little following and what little credit she may have had she has lost through her quarrel with the Queen."

[1] Burnet. Huygens, January 31, 1692. Sylvius, i. See also Klopp, vi., May 1692.

[2] Luttrell, ii. 355.

The King sailed for Holland on March 16, and by the end of the month had secured a brief respite in hunting at Loo. Portland remained there till the end of April and was deputed to receive the Elector Palatine, who came there on a State visit, helping him descend from his carriage and conducting him to the King's presence. The Elector was lodged with his Jesuit confessor in the Queen's apartments. It was during these weeks at Loo that Lord Portland, in conversation with a fellow-countryman, announced his intention of taking his young son out of England as soon as he was twelve years old, "that he might not learn debauchery in that country."

While people in England "had been pleasing themselves," as Burnet phrases it, "with talk of a descent upon France," James was actually preparing for one upon England. It was a good opportunity, for on the eve of the campaign of 1692 it appeared doubtful whether William could rely upon the English Ministers, fleet or army. He was furthermore anxious about the stability of the Grand Alliance. The hopes of a peace between the Emperor and the Turks had been illusory, so that the power of the Empire was again this year heavily handicapped. There was still danger of a third party formed by Sweden, Münster, Hanover and Saxony. William had continually to be paying everyone to help themselves. The adherence of Hanover was finally secured by making the Duke an Elector, but so far were the Ambassadors who met at the Hague from an honourable unanimity that William was forced to rely upon an inner Council, consisting of the Imperial Ambassador Windischgrätz, Waldeck, Heinsius and Portland.

Towards the end of April it began to appear that an invasion of England by France was not only really intended but was imminent. On April 24 William wrote to Heinsius that though he had at first thought the scheme of a landing impossible, he was now inclined to believe it, and the only means of averting it was the energetic fitting out of the Dutch fleet. Leaving Loo for the Hague, the King told Windischgrätz that he was considering the advisability of sending Lord Portland to England to support the Queen,[1] he added later that if necessary he would return there

[1] Windischgrätz, May 9. "The King sent Lord Portland to let me know he would come in person if he heard of any actual landing."—*The Queen's Diary.*

himself. Meanwhile Portland sailed in company with Lord Essex and a convoy of men-of-war, arriving in London on May 2 (12). A Cabinet Council was at once summoned and energetic preparations carried forward for putting London and the country in a state of defence. But happily in this crisis it needed no foreign intervention to rouse in Englishmen a sense of patriotism. Again the country rallied round the Queen. A combined English and Dutch fleet was in the Channel before one French squadron under Tourville appeared. It was believed in France that it could beat the Dutch and the English would not fight. But James, as usual, destroyed his own chances. He issued a Declaration threatening with vengeance so vast a number of persons that the English Council had it reprinted and circulated everywhere as useful propaganda.[1] The Queen's wisdom and judgment completed the reaction that her father's folly had begun. To Admiral Russell she wrote declaring her confidence in the loyalty and patriotism of her navy, with orders to read her letter to all his captains. In this crucial moment Russell was won over, and his loyalty assured. On May 19 the French fleet was defeated and destroyed, and its remnants burnt within sight of James II. off La Hogue. The last great crisis that threatened the Government of William in England was averted.

With the slow passage of news in those days, it was not till the 24th that Bentinck received an express from Admiral Allemond with intelligence of the engagement, with which Talmarsh was hurriedly dispatched to the King in Holland; and not till the 28th that the Queen received an express from Russell. Bentinck, Rochester and Sidney were deputed to go to Portsmouth to compliment the Admiral. They carried with them £50,000 for distribution among the seamen, each man was to have a month's pay for distinguished service. Meanwhile the King in Flanders had begun another year's disappointing campaign.

It is characteristic of the dual conflict on land and sea which William was waging that this decisive engagement finds hardly any mention in the William and Bentinck Letters which are occupied solely with the land campaign in Flanders. Before this, on May 10, William had written to Bentinck from Breda that he had received the letters written just as he was setting sail, and hoped this one

[1] See Luttrell and Burnet.

would find him in good health at Whitehall. A week later the King wrote again, still from Breda, to say that contrary winds delayed the passage of the Zealand and North Holland fleets. He declares himself ready to embark at the first warning, but does not think his presence so very necessary. "To prevent a descent," the King continues, "certainly only the fleet can do it, therefore hasten its going to sea as much as possible." He adds that he is sending Talmarsh and alludes to some colonels who are said to be suspected. "Engage them if possible, but if there is any proof casheer them."

Immediately afterwards the King proceeded to Brussels. He was now commanding the strongest army the Allies had yet put in the field, maintained principally at the expense of England and Holland, with some small help from Spain, and composed largely of German troops. Louis XIV., with Madame de Maintenon and all the paraphernalia of a Court, had arrived at Mons. On the day after William's arrival at Brussels he wrote again to Bentinck to say that he hears that the enemy are mustering all their troops near Mons. The King of France has arrived there in person.

"This must mean some great enterprise. Troops have come from all parts of Germany. The Spaniards fear the bombardment of this city [Brussels], but I hope to prevent it. Most exposed are Aeth, Charleroy and perhaps Namur." The King adds, "I confess that the proceedings of Admiral Russell are very extraordinary. As long as all the fleets are not at sea I shall be very disquieted, and not less so when they are, for all depends on the issue of a [naval] combat."

On the 22nd William writes again from Brussels:

"It is astonishing why the armies of the enemy make no movement, being still in camp before Mons. I cannot understand why they still undertake nothing . . . my cough worries me more than ever, I think the North wind is the cause, certainly it prevents the grass from growing, it has been freezing all the night."

The weather was exceptionally cold. The King was lodging at an inn called the "Koeckelbergh," then let to

an innkeeper who carried on a busy trade. It was outside the Flemish gate, about half an hour from the city. Huygens was lodged in a little chapel and complained to the King, who came to see his quarters and remarked that he could not have a fire.

On May 23 William writes :

" Luxemburg's army has marched to-day and encamped near Senef. If the army of the King of France has followed it can only be directed on Charleroy or Namur. If the latter I will try to succour it cost what it may. Do not tell the Queen that you have received this letter, since I did not write to her, and what I have written to you can only give her anxiety."

The next letter, written still from the " Camp near Brussells," is undated. The King is very uneasy because the east wind prevents news coming from England and he fears that it may keep the ships in the Thames while the enemy's fleet is at sea. The enemy were to invest Namur yesterday and he is taking troops to its relief, " So we shall have a great affair before you can be here for which I am very sorry." He had already urged Bentinck's return as soon as possible. He concludes : " The dismissal and arrest of officers that the Queen has done is a very delicate thing, and one cannot well judge of it without knowing all the circumstances."

Some intervening letters have probably disappeared, for there is no allusion to the victory of La Hogue.[1] On May 28 the King went on to the Cloister of Bethlehem, where the weather was very hot and water scarce. William writes from here on June 1 a brief letter to Bentinck hoping that he is arrived at the Hague. To-morrow he will camp near L'Abbaye de Parck. He gives Bentinck directions for joining him. There is no time to lose, he must travel night and day.

Bentinck, however, had not yet left England. On June 3 he was at Portsmouth, where Councils of War were being held with regard to following up the victory of La Hogue, measures which in fact were never taken. The last of

[1] Russell's dispatch reached the King on June 2.

these was "held on shore owing to Lord Portland's indisposition."[1] So that Bentinck's departure was postponed owing to ill health as well as public business. On June 4 Luttrell notes "Lord Portland goes hence to-morrow in the Charlotte Yacht." But before he was able to join the King in Flanders William had already failed to relieve Namur.

The King's headquarters were at Melé when Bentinck at length rejoined him on June 24. He was still there on July 2, for Huygens, making his way through the mud to his tent in a welcome interval of cool weather, was overtaken by my Lord Portland on horseback and bidden to dine with him. The day afterwards Bentinck started in command of 3000 horse and foot on some expedition against Mons, so his secretary van Leeuwen reported, but owing to the continued heavy rains Boufflers anticipated him.[2]

Once more William attempted to come to grips with the enemy. On July 31 Luxemburg was in position near Steinkirk. His right wing was covered by a wooded height. This William sought to surprise, after false intelligence had been conveyed to Luxemburg by a spy. The height was taken by the Duke of Würtemberg; the French army hastily rallying to the attack, the ground was long bloodily contested, but towards evening Marshal Boufflers arrived on the scene with fresh troops. The King commanded a retreat, the Allied troops drew off in good order and returned to their quarters, but the losses on both sides were very great; no quarter was given. William believed that during the contest the French army was within an ace of destruction. The enemy might have been annihilated, it all turned on one moment. This he said afterwards in conversation with Windischgrätz.[3] At the time he wrote to Heinsius from Limbeeck, August 4, as if he could not bear to enlarge upon a disaster he was already seeking to repair: "You shall receive particulars of yesterday's battle from the Earl of Portland and Hr. van Dyckvelt, to whom I refer myself. You can easily understand how deeply I am chagrined that I have not been able to succeed better."

Only one more unsuccessful attempt of this year's campaign in which Bentinck was concerned requires mention, and that was a scheme for bombarding Dunkirk by land

[1] Luttrell, June 3, 1692.
[2] Huygens.
[3] Klopp, vi. 90. In October.

and sea. Bentinck left for Ostend on September 3, and fifteen battalions were dispatched there. This seems to have been merely a preliminary visit of inquiry, for on the 6th Bentinck was again at Headquarters, returning to Dunkirk with Ouwerkerk. They were followed by volunteers, Lord Essex among them, and orders were sent to Admiral Evertzen to destroy the harbour of Dunkirk and burn the ships there. A letter from Bentinck's secretary, van Leeuwen, who was with him at Furnes, reached the King's camp at Gram to say the whole fleet was assembled off Dunkirk, but notwithstanding Captain Bart had managed to get out with two privateers. This attempt on Dunkirk was followed with great interest in England. Narcissus Luttrell makes frequent allusions to it. But on September 17 he noted, "Nothing doing yet against Dunkirk, nor believed will be." On September 14 William wrote to Bentinck from the Camp at Gram :

"It is vexacious not to be able to execute a thing upon which one has resolved, and it is certain that it will have a very bad effect in England," but the difficulty in bombarding Dunkirk is so great that the King thinks it better that the Duke of Leinster should be posted with his Corps between Furnes and Dixmuyde, and should fortify the latter and endeavour to make himself master of La Knocke. "I do not think your presence is any longer necessary to this army . . . you can come and join me, since I also will hardly remain longer with the army than some days to see what part the enemy will adopt after the Duke of Leinster has taken this position."

As Bentinck still delayed his return, the King wrote again three days later to say that he hoped Dixmuyde had been taken without loss or difficulty, and to order Bentinck to come without loss of time.

The next day an earthquake occurred in the camp. Huygens was sitting in his tent at dessert when he saw the table begin to rock, the wine suddenly spilt from the glasses, and at the same moment an alarm was sounded that the King was in danger. The drums began to beat and a cry was raised of "Sauve le roy." In two or three minutes all was quiet again. In Furnes it seems to have been more

serious, for Bentinck, from whom the King had a letter next day, remarked that while he was writing there was such a violent earthquake that he feared the house would have fallen on his head.

By October 6 the King had returned to Loo. On the 20th he and Bentinck were again in England. The King's yacht was convoyed by five men-of-war under command of Admiral Shovel. Four French ships, believed to be commanded by Jean Bart himself, drew near, but made off again as the sea was running high. They landed after a troublesome passage between Yarmouth and Harwich and spent the night at Colchester. The Queen met them on the journey to London.

CHAPTER VIII

AUTUMN OF 1692 TO SPRING OF 1695—CAMPAIGN OF 1693–4 —PEACE NEGOTIATIONS—DEATH OF THE QUEEN

THE session of Parliament which followed the King's return in the autumn of 1692 was a very important one in the Constitutional History of England, though fraught with irritating delays from William's point of view. There was at the time a great deal of dissatisfaction in the country at large. The land campaign had been unsuccessful and the initial success of La Hogue had never been followed up, consequently the Channel was filled with privateers, chief among them the famous Jean Bart, with disastrous results to both English and Dutch shipping. The failure of the harvest had sent up the price of bread, when prices were already high owing to a depreciated coinage. The increase of crimes of violence, especially in London and its neighbourhood, was very serious. Burglaries, daylight robberies, attacks by armed highwaymen, were of everyday occurrence. The King took measures to repress these disorders. The very low standard of morality of the England of that day, to which Bentinck had referred in speaking of his son's education, cannot be better exemplified than by the murder of the actor Mountford which took place in December of this year. The advances of Lord Mohun, "a drunken beast," Huygens calls him, had been rejected by the popular actress of the day, the charming Mrs. Bracegirdle. Mohun, believing that her coldness was dictated by a preference for the actor Mountford, set upon him in the street with the help of a friend and stabbed him. There was no question that a peculiarly cowardly and brutal murder had been committed. Mohun was found guilty by the Grand Jury of Middlesex. But Mohun was a peer and was judged by his peers, and so high was the power of privilege, so low the standard of justice, that though there was no question as to his

guilt, the peers acquitted Lord Mohun by sixty-nine votes to fourteen.[1] Among the honourable minority of fourteen was Lord Portland.

In his speech from the Throne the King with tactful intent had asked for the help and advice of Parliament. The insertion of the second word he had cause to rue, as Strateman remarked, for it gave the Commons an excuse to discuss and prescribe everything. Van Solmes was attacked, and blamed for the ill success of Steinkirk. He had no friends. In both Houses there were complaints of the preference shown to foreign officers. The Lords, says Strateman :

" can endure Dutchmen as little as the Commons. With as little cause, as with the exception of some generals such as Portland and Ouwerkerk no Dutchmen are established here. The complaints arise much more from their native dislike to all foreigners."

The King's temper was more than ever exacerbated by these lengthy and, to him, futile discussions. " It is impossible to give you any definite information about things here," he wrote to Heinsius, " everything is in so confused and uncertain a state, that no one can say what the outcome of the session will be." [2] Later, on December 9 (November 29), the King writes that Parliament is taking intolerable and impertinent resolutions. They will vote money eventually, he adds, but not enough and too late. The King was violently opposed to the Triennial Bill, which he considered was an encroachment on his own prerogative. He was advised to consent to its passing, but so strong was his feeling against it that he sent Bentinck to consult the trusted friend and adviser of his earlier days, Sir William Temple, who now lived in retirement, in failing health, at Moor Park near Farnham. Bentinck went, and Temple gave it as his opinion that the Bill should pass. To ensure that his reason for this advice should be accurately represented to the King by an Englishman equipped with a knowledge of constitutional history, he sent his secretary, Jonathan Swift, to Kensington. The King listened, but was not convinced. In March Parliament was prorogued.

[1] " So universal a corruption, the whole nobility giving such a proof of it in their behaviour at Lord Mohun's tryal."—*Queen Mary's Diary.*

[2] Heinsius, 295.

Towards the end of March 1693 Bentinck had what seems to have been rather a serious attack of illness; it sounds not unlike what we should now call influenza, "a very severe cold, an oppression on the chest, and could get no sleep." A few days later he had two hours' sleep, after which he began to recover.

It was in the middle of April before the return journey to Holland was accomplished by the King, who was delayed by bad weather, and obliged to return to London till such time as the new moon should bring a change of wind. Bentinck's health had delayed his travelling, and from Harwich the King wrote him one of those tenderly affectionate letters that he wrote to no one else:

"Harwich, March 29.

"I only arrived here yesterday evening at 9 o'clock, the roads being terrible. The wind continues directly contrary and no hope of a change unless it is to-morrow towards evening when there will be a new moon. If the wind does not change, I shall come back on Monday evening to Kensington, which you can believe will greatly annoy me, but the satisfaction of seeing you again will console me for it."

After anxious inquiries after Bentinck's health, about which he is anxious to have news, the letter continues:

"I have never in my life been so jolted as I was yesterday" ("Je n'ay este de ma vie plus chahotté que hier"). "J'espère que vous este à present entièrement persuadé que l'on ne sauroit vous aimer plus que je ne suis. G."

The closing words of this letter suggest that the unhappy misunderstandings and jealousies with regard to Keppel had already begun. In February of this year Huygens noted that "Portland and Keppel agreed as well together as fire and water." As far as the diaries of Huygens are an index of events, it is noticeable that there are more frequent mentions of Keppel; he begins to be quoted; he is travelling in one of the King's carriages; he has set up a card table; he has lost a valuable diamond; he is evidently a person of growing importance. Mercurial, hail-fellow-well-met, he has none of the dignity, aloofness and weight of Lord Portland,

who one can even imagine would have rather disapproved of the King's familiar joking with his dependents. When Huygens tumbled upstairs, the King laughed heartily and chaffed him about it. It is still, however, Bentinck who gives orders.

The King's next letter is written from the Hague, April 13 (23):

"I arrived here in the evening at 11 having eaten on the way at Rhynenburg's. We have had a fair enough passage, having set sail on Saturday at 7 a.m. from the North buoy, but owing to the great calm we could not put out to sea till towards evening, and yesterday at daybreak we were off the coast of Zealand, having gone a little out of our course, and a great calm coming on, we could not make the entrance to the Meuse till towards noon, and finding the tide too low to enter it, I embarked in a chaloupe and landed at the usual place towards four o'clock, but found nobody there, nor any carriage to meet me, as they had not heard the cannon fired."

As soon as William was returned to the Hague he met Heinsius and Windischgrätz to discuss the plan of campaign. There was no immediate prospect of a peace between the Emperor Leopold and the Turks. The main burden of the war would therefore continue to fall upon England and Holland. The Allies exhibited the same rapacity and the same jealousies as heretofore and William decided that they must see what the enemy intended to do and lay their plans accordingly, as his power was superior.[1]

Before leaving the Hague the King wrote to Bentinck, April 17 (7), saying he had with great difficulty persuaded the Count de Solmes to continue in service:

". . . As I was closing my letter I received yours from which I rejoice to hear that you have enough strength to have mounted the stairs, in which however you have done very wrong. May the Good God give you enough to be able soon to cross the sea. The yacht is ordered. As for a convoy it

[1] Klopp, vi. 173, estimates the Allied army in the Netherlands at a total of 122,000 and that of France at 119,700, leaving them a balance in men of 2000 to the good.

will not be wanting, as there are so many ships of war at the North Buoy. The Queen must order one, notice for which must be given in time, in order that you do not have to wait when you are in a condition to start. G."

On April 18 William went to Loo for some boar hunting. The same day he wrote to Bentinck on the chance of his still being in England, though he hopes his letter will not find him there. The King goes on to say: "I am by no means pleased to hear that My Lord Middleton has gone to France, he is not a man to take such a step unless something of importance, and well concerted, were on foot."

William's anxiety was well founded. Louis XIV., notwithstanding the exhaustion of France, was making one more supreme effort to crush the Allies, but at the same time he suggested that James should make some effort on his own behalf by trying to meet the views of his subjects. The leading Jacobites believed that if James II. would consent to resign the throne in favour of the Prince of Wales, who should be educated in the Protestant religion, all difficulties might be composed. Their views were represented to James by Charles Earl of Middleton, a Protestant, and a man of ability. James II. received him with reluctance, and was with difficulty induced to sign a more moderate Declaration than had hitherto appeared. But on the crucial points he was firm, and the Declaration came too late to convince anybody of its sincerity. On May 6 Bentinck joined the King at Loo, still hardly recovered from his illness and looking "very thin and poorly."

On May 15 Louis XIV., accompanied by his usual train, went to Compiègne with much pomp and ceremony. He ordered de Lorge to take Heidelberg. It was taken without a blow through the treachery of its commander. Louis XIV.'s spy system was extraordinarily complete. And it is singular that while spies of every other nationality were found to betray their fatherlands, it was not so among the French.[1] One of the most powerful weapons of Louis XIV. was his systematic corruption to treachery in foreign camps.

[1] Klopp, vi. 178. "Es dürfte sehr schwer sein aus jener Zeit, auch nur ein einziges Beispiel namhaft zu machen, das ein Französe diese Sache für geld verkauft habe."

His plan of campaign for 1693 included, besides the mediation which Middleton was to attempt in England, an elaborate scheme for the seizure by Luxemburg of Herzogenbosch, which should form a base for the rallying of Dutch malcontents. The details are complicated and unnecessary to recapitulate, the younger Halewyn, Burgomaster of Dordrecht, was involved in it and condemned to perpetual imprisonment. The Halewyn affair looms large in the annals of that day, but it was only a thread in the complicated web that the craft of Louis XIV. had woven to secure victory. There were rumours among the Ambassadors that it included the murder of the King at Loo.[1] The inquiry by the States was kept secret, but Louis XIV. appears to have known of it. For after three weeks he sent for Luxemburg and told him that he was going to return to Versailles and to send the Dauphin with a strong detachment into Germany, adding that his well-thought-out plan must have been betrayed, otherwise he could not possibly have missed his mark.

On May 26 William went to Brussels with the Prince de Vaudemont and the Elector of Bavaria, who had succeeded Gastanaga as Governor of the Spanish Netherlands. Bentinck was with the King at the Abbey de Parck, and was lodged in a house close by. It was a very pleasant place, with three fishponds belonging to the monks and a swift stream that turned a mill. From the camp the Allies heard the salvoes fired by the French artillery on the news that Rosas in Catalonia had been taken according to plan. The King was here when the news arrived that Louis XIV. had returned to Versailles. The camp remained some time longer here. The weather was intensely hot, the heat of the stones outside the Abbey could be felt through the soles of a man's boots, and even in the late evening to come out of the shaded cloisters was like going into an oven, says Huygens, who was not inventive as regards similes. The abnormal heat was followed by thunderstorms as violent. So much rain fell that outside Lord Portland's house, which stood at the end of the lane leading to the avenue, the water had stood six or seven feet high, several men were drowned, and Ouwerkerk himself had been in peril of drowning in trying to cross the bridge.

Dimly and brokenly the life in camp takes shape and

[1] See also the Grandval Assassination Plot of 1692.

is seen in glimpses. In the evenings of the hot summer days Huygens and his friends wander by the three great fishponds of the Abbey. All sorts of rumours are retailed, brought by messengers riding in from Brussels or elsewhere, camp gossip is repeated from one to another. The King meanwhile reconnoitres in person, vigilant, untiring, riding out early and returning late, to send for his secretary and write a hurried letter to the Queen. Friends and acquaintances "eat" together at one another's quarters. One fine Sunday Huygens, on his way to dine, meets Lord Portland, who invites him to his house to "eat" with a large company, among whom was the Duke of Würtemberg. One imagines a meal of some state. Tea was afterwards served. The next day Keppel dined at Huygens's table, and, frivolous and vain as ever, he related at length a rather pointless conversation he had had with "Betty, who washes our dishes," coming across the square.

On July 19 came news that Luxemburg was advancing in strength, and was threatening Liège. William left his strong position at Parke van Löwe and advanced to meet him with an army that was not at full strength. The armies met at Neerwinden and Landen. The ensuing battle, in proportion to the numbers engaged in it, was admitted to be one of the bloodiest ever fought. Luxemburg concentrated his attack on the right wing of the Allies. It wavered and the King ordered the retreat. Except on the right wing it was conducted in order. There was no pursuit. Great as was the loss on both sides, the advantage remained with the French. The King had fought throughout the day with his troops and had had more than one narrow escape of being killed.

In one of those brief letters which express far more than words the weariness and despondency, the reaction after the strain of battle, he wrote to Heinsius:[1] "July 30. It is very painful to me, I must tell you, that the enemy attacked us yesterday morning, and after a very obstinate fight, we have been beaten." With recovered hopes and reviving energy he writes two days later: "I believe our loss is not so great as I had at first supposed, and I hope that we shall speedily be again in a position to be able to confront the enemy with a formidable army." For

[1] Heinsius, 325, July 30.

some reason Bentinck does not seem to have fought by the King's side at Landen,[1] or to have accompanied him during the retreat. Of his being wounded there is oddly enough no mention in Huygens, who is careful to chronicle such details and mentions the wounding and subsequent death of van Solmes. On the 29th Huygens and others in the King's service were at Diest. Here they learned on July 29 that the battle was lost, and the King was reported to have gone to Breda. They were told that Diest was unsafe, and were about to leave it, when they received commands from Lord Portland to remain where they were till further orders. On the 31st marching orders were given that they were to proceed to Mechlin, where the King was expected. On the road Huygens was overtaken by Portland and Dykvelt and entertained at the house of a village pastor. At dusk they rode through Mechlin on to the camp at Eppighem, where the King was lodged in a gentleman's house. Here Huygens was given so dirty a room that he preferred camping out. On the morning of the same day, July 31, the King had written to Portland :

" Although I hope to see you this evening, I am writing to express my joy at your fortunate escape. God grant that you may soon be entirely recovered. These are great chastisements that the Good God has sent us in a little time. We must submit to His will without murmuring, and try in the future to deserve His anger less. G." [2]

[1] Luttrell, iii. 146.

[2] Dr. John Tillotson, Archbishop of Canterbury, to Lord Portland, August 1, 1693, after Landen :

" My Lord,

" I cannot forbear on this great occasion to congratulate the King's safety and merciful preservation from so many deaths, to which his royal person was so eminently exposed in the late bloody engagement. I thank God from my heart, who protected him in that day of danger, and likewise preserved your Lordship's life, which had been so lately restored. I hope the wound your Lordship received is not dangerous and that it may be healed without losing the use of your hand. We have got but a very imperfect account of the issue of the whole action and what has happened since, having received no letters of a later date than the morning after that fight, by reason of contrary winds. . . . I shall be glad to hear of your Lordship's perfect recovery, who am with the truest esteem and respect,

" My Lord,

" Your Lordship's most faithful and humble servant,

" J. C."

On August 12 the Headquarters were removed to the neighbourhood of Brussels. Bentinck was still with the King, and after the news had come of van Solmes's death, William wrote to the Duke of Würtemberg asking that his Command might be given to Portland. Early in October the King was back at the Hague, having visited Loo on the way. It was possibly during the visit that he wrote the following undated letter from Dieren to Portland at "Zuylesteyn:"

"Not having found a great stag at Dorewaert, we hunted the day before yesterday all the heath, and had a good but rough chase. It is this that obliges me to make the rendezvous with Ginkel to-morrow." . . . Bentinck is to come straight from Zuylesteyn, "being a shorter road than to Swaenhuys, especially if you can pass the Slapesdyck, which I don't doubt with the dry weather there has been. I have had orders given to your valet to place your horses as you had ordered, although the meeting place is changed, which you know is the same thing with regard to remounts."

William proposed to sail on the 18th, but a protracted spell of unusually bad weather prevented it. On November 4 he was still at the Hague and dined with Portland. He embarked on the 7th in spite of the storm that still continued.[1]

There was much discontent in England when William and Bentinck returned there in the late autumn of 1693. It was not understood here that the King by dint of his never-ceasing energy and unfailing resource had kept the French armies in check in the face of heavy odds against him. It was only known that the Allies had no victory to their credit, and that the battle of Landen was a defeat. The loss of the Smyrna fleet was a still more disastrous event. The Dutch and English merchant ships, laden with cargoes of great value, were allowed through delay and mismanagement in the naval administration to fall into the hands of the French—"The result of pure neglect, or possibly something worse," was William's comment to Heinsius.[2] As always, when occasion served, Jacobites and malcontents were not

[1] Huygens does not seem to have got to England till February 3 (13); when he presented himself at Kensington the King said genially, "Well, you've been a very long time on the journey."

[2] Heinsius, July 27, 1693.

slow to seize the opportunity of venting their spleen in a crop of virulent and mischievous pamphlets.

England was, however, actually in a much better position than France at this time, for the harvest had been good and the country's resources were far from being taxed to the utmost, while in France both the harvest and the vintage had failed. That the advantage was really with the Allies, and that Louis XIV. knew it, was shown by the feelers that he began to send out, feelers as to the terms on which peace could be made. William was not slow to see that this was the moment for vigorously pushing his advantage and taking a strong offensive. Later on, in the summer of 1694, the counsels of Portland were thrown into the scale against his doing so, but at this moment, the winter of 1693–4, it was a question not of action but of preparation for acting, and as usual William found himself hampered by what seemed to him the futile debates and mischievous delays of Parliamentary procedure. With regard to this recurrent position of affairs two things are worth noting. In the first place, William, with the breadth of vision that comprehended the myriad threads of a most tangled scheme of foreign policy, William the linch-pin of the Grand Alliance, who imposed his will upon the principalities and powers that should execute it, whose tenacious energies were concentrated upon the main task of freeing Europe from France, saw in England the weight that should turn the scale. It is doubtful if he ever saw in it much more than a means to an end, a source of supplies. He does not seem ever to have studied the English Constitution. He may well have regarded the House of Commons of that day as a mob, and a venal mob, as they were : their leaders he had every reason to distrust, more so even than he knew. He was indeed very jealous of his own prerogative, upon occasion injudiciously so. Nevertheless in his momentous reign there were constitutional questions of so great importance before the House of Commons that our modern system of government may be said to have originated then, with the foundation of the National Debt, the Bank of England, and the system of Party Government. All these things considered, it is only fair to acknowledge, notwithstanding the narrow insular dislike of the English Parliament of that day for foreigners, and especially for the King's Dutch friends, with Portland at the head of them, their violent party passions, and their

ignorance of foreign affairs, they did behave very liberally as regarded supplies; though incidentally they took the opportunity of making personal attacks on each other, and of criticising the administration of public affairs, which was only too much open to criticism. What they thought of the King they made pretty clear in debate; what he thought of them is regularly expressed in the weary impatience of his letters to Heinsius: [1]

"I had hoped by this post to have somewhat more information to give you of the constitution of things here, but these are so confused and such general dissatisfaction among men, on account of our misfortunes at sea, and party feelings are so vehement that one knows in nothing what one has to expect. Some give hopes, some despair, in a short time everything must develop, and I foresee surely that I shall be obliged to do things very contrary to my feelings and nature, without knowing whether it will be effective or not. I shall leave nothing unattempted, if it is practicable to maintain the common cause. The Good God give us a good result."

It is difficult to realise how chaotic was the government of those days. After the Revolution of 1688 the King's prerogative was not only more strictly limited, but he was an absentee. The great offices were in the hands of men of different parties, holding different theories of government. The exigencies of the time evolved a system of government by which offices came to be held by men of one party and of like opinions. The transition took place gradually between 1693 and 1696, and in the first instance was largely due to the influence of one of the most enigmatic characters of the Revolution, the subtle and insinuating Sunderland.[2] So it came about that a Ministry was formed in which the Whigs had the predominance, for they as a body were readier than the Tories to support the King.

William sought to reinstate Lord Shrewsbury at the Treasury, but Shrewsbury retired into the country, making his feeble health an excuse for his uneasy conscience. The

[1] Heinsius, November 3 (13), 1693, Kensington.

[2] Sunderland lost no time in taking steps towards his reinstatement. See his letter to Sidney of March 1 (11), 1688. "I desire you will engage Mr. Bentinck to be favourable to me," etc. Blencowe.

King's will was not to be so easily thwarted, so though the Earl contrived to evade responsibility from November till March, he was eventually persuaded to accept the Seals with Trenchard as the other Secretary.[1] It appears from a later report of the Imperial Ambassador, who expressed some apprehensions about the growing ascendancy of Sunderland, that Lord Portland himself pointed out that no other Englishman possessed the same insight into and experience of foreign affairs.[2] These changes occupied several harassing and arduous months, in which the activities of Parliament were divided between party struggles and financial arrangements to provide for the continued cost of the war.[3] The year 1693 marked the origin of the National Debt, 1694 marked the establishment of the Bank of England. A Place Bill, which was again brought in, and a Bill for the Naturalisation of Foreign Protestants, both of which failed to pass, excited violent feeling, and equally violent expression of opinion. The Naturalisation question gave scope to the most unmeasured attacks on the Dutch. Finally the House occupied itself with Supply.

The Place Bill was designed to prevent any officers of the Crown from sitting in Parliament. It provided that no member of the House of Commons elected after January 1694 should be permitted to hold office under the Crown while retaining his seat. The Lords, however, added as an amendment : " unless he be afterwards again chosen to serve in the same Parliament," to which the Commons agreed, apparently without realising how the Bill was weakened by the amendment. Neither did William realise that in such a form the Bill was hardly a menace to his prerogative. He withheld his consent, though by doing so he provoked a dangerous state of ill-feeling at a time when unanimity in

[1] Through the mediation of Elizabeth Villiers (Coxe's *Shrewsbury*, p. 30). He was rewarded with a Dukedom. For reasons of Shrewsbury's acceptance see Dalrymple, iii. 52 and 234, and McPherson's *Original Papers*, i. 481.

[2] Klopp, vi. 167. Auersperg, October 22, 1697.

[3] The disastrous naval administration resulted in the rehabilitation of Russell. He was made First Lord of the Admiralty and was once again in command of the Channel fleet. Charles Montague's brilliant financial abilities pointed him out as Chancellor of the Exchequer. John Somers, a leading Whig, was made Lord Keeper, with them was associated Thomas Wharton. The small group of Whig leaders gradually effected the organisation of their party and became known as the " Junto." Only two Tories of any importance remained in the Ministry : Danby, now Lord Caermarthen, the Lord President, and Godolphin at the Treasury, but his energies and interests were almost exclusively limited to his official duties.

the dispatch of business and the granting of supplies was all-important to him. "It has not only surprised everyone," wrote Hoffmann, "but the Lower House has felt so strongly about it that one can only hope their irritated temper may not interrupt the hitherto favourable course of events." The House debated the question with closed doors. It appeared that the King had not taken the advice of the Privy Council in the matter. Therefore it was said the refusal of the King must be traced to some private person, and certainly from the one to whom the Lower House was wont to attribute everything displeasing to them, from Portland. After much violent discussion the House passed a resolution that whoever had advised the King not to sanction the Bill was an enemy to their Majesties and the Kingdom. It was carried with few dissentients. Further, a representation was presented to the King by the whole House humbly begging that in future he would deign to listen to the advice of his Parliament and not to the discourse of private persons, who might perhaps have special designs not in accordance with the true interests of your Majesty and your People. The King, who was at the moment entertaining the Margrave of Baden [1] with the chase, hurriedly returned from Windsor and tactfully turned the tables on the House of Commons by assuring them in a conciliatory manner that he should always consider their advice as most valuable, and that he should regard a counsellor who attempted to diminish the existing confidence between the King and his people as his enemy. The House was far from satisfied with this reply, the Tories were for continuing the contest, the enemies of the Government in the House were eager for

[1] The Margrave Louis of Baden had come to London on a visit and was received with every mark of honour. His arrival at the Tower—he came by water—was greeted with sixty rounds of cannon, and the Court at Kensington had never been so lively. Incidentally, like other German Princes, the Margrave had a more solid end in view. He wanted a subsidy for the army of the Upper Rhine. To this end he sounded Portland, who begged him not to broach the subject to the King, who could not grant it. The serious contest over the Place Bill which followed must have been a useful object lesson to him. He was given the late Queen's lodging at Whitehall, and forty dishes a day were appointed for his table, which perhaps account for a later report that he was ill of the gout.* He afterwards visited Windsor, and it was while hunting with him there that the King was hurriedly recalled to London to deal with the Parliamentary crisis that occurred over the Place Bill.

* Luttrell, iii. 248 *seq.*

the fray. But the Whigs rallied their forces, and the House turned its attention to questions of supply. The Naval Estimates were passed readily. The Army Estimates excited more discussion; but eventually the King was granted the larger part of what he had asked. In proroguing Parliament he thanked the Commons for their liberal supplies.

Soon after his return to England in the autumn Bentinck was called upon to intervene and adjust a trifling difficulty with an indiscreet and obstinate Spanish Ambassador that might have led to international complications for want of timely and tactful handling. He had hired a house from Lord Mulgrave (John Sheffield, Marquis of Normanby) for the period of his embassy, but left it on his wife's death and took a lodging in the Park of Whitehall at Spring Garden. Here he proceeded to have erected a Papist chapel, the windows of which overlooked the Queen's garden, a privileged place within the enclosure. The Palace officials, much embarrassed on observing this novelty, made known to him that his proceedings were illegal, and that he could not publicly celebrate Mass within the precincts of Whitehall. As this had no effect, they appealed to Parliament to pray the King to speak to the Ambassador. The King replied to one of the Lords that he must settle the affair quietly, it was not necessary to make a public disturbance about it. Portland was charged with the conduct of the business, and to ensure the avoidance of any scandal he did so through the Imperial Ambassador Hoffmann. As soon as Hoffmann alluded to the matter the Ambassador flew into a rage and would not listen to reason ("no more than formerly in the affair of his wife and the hat") says the narrator. Unfortunately there appears to be no explanation forthcoming of this allusion, evidently a much-talked-of affair at the time. Bentinck's tactful appointment of the Holy Roman Emperor's Ambassador as intervener having failed, he was forced to deal with the affair himself, especially as Lord Mulgrave, who was threatening to appeal to Parliament to force the Spanish Ambassador to pay his rent, declared that he was entitled to seize his effects, unless the King would pay for him and get reimbursed subsequently by the King of Spain. He also wrote to Ronquillo, who had been a personal friend of his, to let them know at Madrid what sort of a person was representing their King's interests in England, an ignorant fellow, who just picked up what news he could from the coffee

houses. Bentinck's intervention was so successful that when next the Spanish Ambassador saw M. Hoffmann he told him pleasantly that the new chapel was to serve him as a kitchen.[1]

William Bentinck makes little appearance in public during these months, and there is hardly more record of his domestic life. Huygens did not return to England with his master in November, so that his invaluable record is missing for several months. The very unfavourable weather seems to have been the only reason, added to some passive disinclination on the part of Huygens for leaving his native country and risking a life, whose creature comforts he much enjoyed, upon the sea. His fellow secretary, de Wilde, was actually drowned in the stormy weather which preceded the King's departure. In going ashore from the ship to return to the Hague his boat fouled a man-of-war and was swamped in the harbour. The King's only comment on hearing of the loss of his unfortunate secretary from Huygens was : " Well, you must look out for another." So that his last news of the Court was in the tedious days of waiting before the King availed himself of a temporary lull to make the passage, when he went ashore and dined with Bentinck.

On his return he has not much more to tell of Bentinck ; it is Keppel who seems to be with the King. There are indications that Keppel was more about the King's person ; he begins to remain in the room when the secretary is taking notes of letters, which shows that his discretion was trusted to that extent by the King, though he had not the capacity to make him eligible for any employment. When there was difficult and delicate work to be done the King turned to Portland.[2] Keppel's irresponsible gaiety, which won him royal favour, no doubt jarred on the grave diplomatist whose influence, powerful as it was, was not sufficient to oust this interloper, whose general reputation could not redound to the King's credit. Bentinck seems to have supported the growing ascendancy of Sunderland, but it is likely that already by some subterranean methods Sunderland encouraged a rising star whose flimsy and loose character made him a rival of negligible importance to himself in affairs of

[1] Hist. MSS. Com. Report, appendix, p. 219, translated from the French of a newsletter, December 8 (18), 1693. Denbigh MSS.

[2] Betty Villiers, his sister-in-law, was his enemy. She intrigued against him, as such creatures will, both with Lord Wharton and with Sunderland, to supplant him by Keppel.

State. Bentinck about this time unfortunately seems to have begun to show temper, where an easy contempt would have been a far surer weapon. That William was very frequently moody and irritable appears clearly from his secretary's diaries. Bentinck's jealousy of Keppel now became common talk at Court, where his popularity seems not to have been much greater than in the House of Commons. The faithful watchdog was perhaps surly to all except the master that he steadfastly loved and served. William might almost have said of him, as he did of Waldeck on his death, " he had the misfortune not to be much loved by anybody." [1] Already in the spring of 1692 Court gossip commented openly on " the great jealousy " there was between my Lord Portland and Keppel, and said that more would be heard of it. A curious anecdote is related by Huygens that Portland, standing behind the King, while he was at table, leant against a door which was behind him. Somebody on the other side wishing to come in at the door tried to open it, and pushed it against him, which the Queen observing called to him, " Look, somebody is pushing my Lord Portland." Whereupon the King remarked testily, " Well, what is he doing standing there ? He always knows so little the respect that is due to me." Huygens's informant thought this was meant to convey that he had lost the Royal favour, with much more to the same purpose, adding that Keppel had succeeded him.[2]

William's journey to Holland for the campaign of 1694, to which he had long impatiently looked forward, was still further delayed by contrary winds. The wind veering to the east on May 14, after a start had been made from Gravesend, the boats put back. Huygens, who had returned to the Post-house, there heard a rumour that the King had decided to go to Margate by land, and thence with a convoy of men-of-war to the Hague viâ Ostend. He went to the little house at which the King had put up to ask for orders. The Queen, seeing him approach, called to him from the window in the unceremonious manner of those days, and laughingly laid the blame on him for so unpropitious a start to their journey, just as Bentinck had done two or three days ago, laughing about it himself. From which it seems that Huygens's long-delayed return in the early part of the year

[1] Heinsius, November 22 (December 1), 1692, p. 300.
[2] Huygens, April 1692, p. 337.

was regarded as a family joke, and he now had the reputation of bringing an ill wind to his fellow-travellers. The King coming from table at the same moment, Huygens asked what it was his pleasure that he should do, and received orders to travel with Zuylestein.

It is a glimpse of days when the exigencies and uncertainty of travel forced Kings and Queens to put back to Gravesend and have such fare as could be got at a "very little house," glad to escape from irksome etiquette of Court life, the King relieved at being at last actually on the way, the Queen, poor soul, glad of the reprieve that gave him back to her for a few more hours before she must return to cope alone with everyone's ill humours in his absence. She accompanied him as far as Canterbury on this last journey that they were ever to take together. The journey was even more unpropitious than was expected. When they were within six miles of the coast of Holland the wind changed, the King, impatient to land, decided to be rowed ashore in an open boat, where he risked his life not only to the winds and waves, but to the chance of capture by the watchful Jean Bart. The perils of the journey were further increased by a thick fog which prolonged it from midday till eight in the evening. The Hague was reached at midnight.

The King soon went to Loo, where Huygens found him rather peevish and with a severe cough. Both Bentinck and Keppel were there, which cannot have tended to soothe his temper. At the end of May he went to Flanders. The projected Peace Negotiations had so far come to nothing. The French King, through his Ambassadors Bonrepos in Copenhagen and d'Avaux in Stockholm, sought to discover on what terms the Allies would make peace. William on his side charged one M. Molo,[1] an Amsterdam merchant resident in Paris on his own business, with secret peace negotiations. The same mission was afterwards confided to Dykvelt, who went to Brussels for the purpose. The main obstacle on the side of France was the recognition of William as King of England, involving as it did the repudiation of James II. William exactly gauged the sincerity of Louis XIV. when he wrote to Heinsius: "If France is in earnest about Peace she will gladly yield this [concessions with regard to a barrier] . . . so long as she has any hope of making divisions

[1] Heinsius, pp. 339, 350, and 352.

in the Republic or among the Allies she will yield nothing." [1] He had written earlier that he believed it would be better to make peace before the campaign than after it, "Fearing that we shall then be in no better state than at present." Later on he writes:

"I am fully convinced that there is no end to be served by talking of an armistice . . . that now the time is so far advanced, that I cannot see that it will be possible to do anything effective before the beginning of the campaign."

The interest of this campaign, which was singularly uneventful, is one of diplomacy rather than of action. The difficult team that the King of England had to drive was more than ever disposed to kick over the traces. Victor Amadeus of Savoy was not to be trusted, though he was threatened by the Emperor with his whole might if he renounced the Alliance. He promised to France inactivity in the forthcoming campaign. In April William wrote to Heinsius that "we may fully rely upon the constancy of the Duke of Savoy.[2] The game of foreign politics at the moment can only be compared to croquet as played by Alice in "Through the Looking Glass" with flamingoes for mallets and hedgehogs for balls. When the Flamingo of Denmark had been with difficulty brought into line, the hedgehog of Saxony uncurled itself to run away. The Elector John George had not been loyal to the Allies. His presence in the field with his troops in the last campaign was due to the influence of his mistress, who had been bribed to achieve this end. She was attacked by smallpox and died. The Elector, refusing to leave her side, fell a victim to the same disease. He was succeeded by his brother, Frederick Augustus, the son of the King of Denmark's sister. Denmark at once turned to Dresden to detach the young Elector from the Alliance. The news of his accession reached the Hague about the time of William's arrival there. The young Elector promised to join the Grand Alliance.

[1] Heinsius, December 1 (11) and 8 (18), 1693, March 20 (30), 1694. The whole letter a most illuminating summary of William's difficulties with the Allies and their rapacity.

[2] William to Heinsius, April 3 (13), 1694, quoting report of Ruvigny, now Earl of Galway, commanding English troops in Piedmont.

Rumours were abroad that this year Louis XIV. proposed to concentrate his forces on the Upper Rhine, whither he would go in person. William, however, while taking measures for its defence, expressed the opinion that the main effort of the enemy would again be in Belgium, in which he proved to be right. Meanwhile much invaluable time had been lost. The King had written to Shrewsbury before leaving Loo pointing this out.[1]

The French and Allied armies meanwhile were lying opposite each other. The French, under the nominal command of the Dauphin, though actually led by Luxemburg, were slightly superior in numbers, but this year for the first time they remained on the defensive, except in Catalonia. In June the King camped for some time again at Bethlehem. Bentinck was with him. Huygens comments on William's ill temper and changed attitude to himself. He seems to think that, though ostensibly friendly, Keppel had a hand in it. He notes in June that "since some time the King does not send for me as often as formerly."

The King had had his wooden house sent to the front, as in the country they expected to occupy no houses were left standing. The village of Bethlehem was dirty, like all the Flemish villages, so was the church, which was full of the humble possessions of the neighbouring peasants brought there for safety. The weather was hot and fine. One late afternoon Huygens was strolling reflectively in the garden of the Cloister, where he seemed to be lodging; it was five o'clock, and after the King had dined Bentinck and two or three others came out to take the air, and seeing Huygens standing reflective, Bentinck slipped up behind him and caught him round the waist "and hid himself when I looked round." It is very seldom that Bentinck indulged himself in practical joking even after dinner. Huygens makes no comment. He seems to have regarded Bentinck with a respectful indifference, but Keppel he distrusts.

Bentinck had some regard for the secretary over and above their official relationship. Such phrases as the following are of frequent recurrence in the *Journal*: "I talked

[1] "The length of the session in Parliament which detained me in England occasioned my losing a favourable opportunity of anticipating the movements of the enemy. This I told you before my departure, and now that I am on the spot I am more clearly convinced of its truth. God knows when we shall again have so good an opportunity, the loss of which we shall have cause to regret this whole campaign."

long with Portland in the antechamber this morning before the King came out." Sometimes the subject was nothing more important than patterns of Brussels carpets, which the King wished to have sent. In June came the ill news of the death of poor Talmash in the attempted descent on Brest. This failure of the naval campaign was at least in part to be attributed to jealousy of Talmash on the part of Marlborough, who had betrayed the design to France.[1] It had the desired effect of reinstating Marlborough in the naval command, as his treachery was unsuspected. William had already written to Shrewsbury to warn him that the secret must have leaked out.[2]

The inactivity of the armies continued. William was indefatigable in inspecting and reviewing his troops. There were many deserters from the French camp, and prisoners implored their captors that they might not be repatriated to die of hunger. Louis XIV. spread abroad rumours that William's sole desire was the prolongation of the war. William told de Vaudemont, who stood high in his confidence, that he regarded this campaign as merely a preparation for the next. The troops were wanting in courage and experience, the recollection of Landen still weighed heavily on their souls. An additional possible cause of his inaction has been suggested in the untrustworthiness of the Elector of Bavaria, on whom command devolved in case of an accident to the King of England, who about this time was discovered to be making a practice of sending provisions through to the French camp. William sent Bentinck and Dykvelt to complain to the Elector, and represented to him that not merely food but intelligence was by this means given to the enemy. The abuse was only stopped with difficulty.

A mysterious lady was interviewed by Bentinck about this time. She seems to have been a spy and may have been concerned in the delinquencies of the egregious Maximilian. She applied in the first instance to Huygens. A " very well-dressed " lady, so his servant said, had waited an hour to see him. She had left her seal in his tent, saying that he

[1] See his letter to James II. Macpherson, i. 480. Dalrymple, iii. 61–62.

[2] William to Shrewsbury, June 18 (28), 1894. " I did not suppose they would have made the attempt without having well reconnoitred the situation of the enemy to receive them ; since they were long apprised of our intended attack, and made active preparations for defence, for what was practicable two months ago was no longer so at present."

would know her from her coat of arms, and declined to give her name. She was attended by a man dressed in blue, of an inferior stamp. The next day she came again and watched for Huygens in the square; the camp was at Roosbeeck; and said to him that she was come to speak to the King, that the Elector of Bavaria had mentioned her name to him, and he had promised to see her. Huygens, always cautious, reported the matter to Lord Portland, and gave orders that she should come to his apartment at three o'clock. At four o'clock Mr. "Blatwait" (Blaithwayt[1]) came to say that my Lord Portland was asleep in a little kitchen that opened off his room. Huygens had no wish to compromise himself with strange ladies, however lively his curiosity concerning her, so he told Bentinck's servant to let her wait. In the end Bentinck talked to her for quite a long time, and Huygens, meeting him afterwards in the antechamber, inquired whether it had been worth while to bring her in and hear what she had to say; "it might very well be," replied Bentinck, and going to the King remained there a very long time; while she waited in his room. The servant said that she was "well dressed but ugly,"[2] and the excellent Huygens never mentions a woman or girl, even those he sees in passing, without appraising their appearance.

Soon after this the camp was moved to Bevercum. Here Huygens's tent was pitched by a stream at which horses were watered all day, but he was able to remove his quarters next day and fix them near Lord Portland's tents. While they were here a French sergeant, deserting from the enemy, was brought in and interviewed by Lord Portland. He said his people were not anxious to fight. These frequent mentions of Lord Portland point to his having resumed his old relations. He is with the King, writing letters and taking instructions. It was believed that Lord Portland's influence was exercised in restraining William from fighting a decisive action. If so, he had good reason for it. He could not afford to disregard the judgment of Shrewsbury, who had written to him (July 10 (20), 1694):

"If I might venture to give my opinion, I should think the loss of a battle so much more dangerous for our affairs,

[1] M.P. for Bath and Secretary of War.
[2] Huygens, 378, July 18.

than the gaining of one would be advantageous, that it ought not to be hazarded, if it might be avoided without considerable prejudice to the reputation of our affairs."

As Shrewsbury represented the views of the Whig Party, it would have been not merely impolitic, but inexpedient to disregard this advice.

Towards the end of July the Dukes of Würtemberg and Holstein-Plön persuaded the King to march upon the Mehaigne. Dykvelt and Portland were both opposed to this advance. An action was believed to be imminent, the Headquarters Staff was divided against itself, but the War Party threw the blame on Portland.

"He knows," it was said, "how greatly the King exposes his person in the event of a battle. It is his duty not to leave the King's side. That does not please him. His fortune is made. He would rather enjoy it. That," concludes Auersperg, "is the judgment of many well-informed persons, and I consider it probable." [1]

It is unnecessary to impute to William Bentinck such unworthy motives, and there had been nothing in his previous career to justify it. A far more cogent reason was the known opinion of Amsterdam. Portland acknowledged this in conversation with the Duke of Würtemberg, who was urging that honour and reputation depended upon striking a decisive blow while the enemy lay between them and the garrison of Liège. Victory was practically assured, he said. Portland replied that if the Duke were acquainted with the views of Amsterdam he would talk differently.[2] If Amsterdam was averse from risking a decisive blow in order to make an inconclusive peace like that of Nimeguen, which should only stimulate the King of France to fresh efforts, it not only behoved the Stadtholder to respect the views of this rich and powerful city, he was bound to do so.

The campaign of 1694 ended, as Heinsius said in the Congress that met at the Hague in October, with the Allies having attained the upper hand everywhere except in

[1] Auersperg, *Bericht*, August 16. Klopp, vi. 335.
[2] Auersperg, *Bericht*, July 9. Klopp, vi. 336.

Catalonia, while neither on the open sea nor in the Mediterranean did the enemy dare longer to dispute their supremacy. It remained to them to prepare during the winter for the ensuing campaign, for only by strength and might could a good and honourable peace be attained.

Early in October the King had returned to Loo. Huygens seems to have found him very irritable and difficult, and to have been much distressed over it. Probably so old and trustworthy a servant resented it more in the presence of Keppel, whom he mentions as being present when he was taking notes of the King's letters. On one of these occasions Keppel, when he was giving some orders, pretended that Huygens was deaf and shouted at the secretary. A stupid and impudent form of practical joke on which he makes no comment. Keppel left the camp before the King's departure. Once more poor Huygens notes that the King "was kind."

Portland seems to have been at Loo also, as "Portland's people" had heard that the King intended to sail for England directly the wind was favourable. William returned to the Hague on October 23 (N.S.), but for some time the usual tedious delays occurred. On one occasion as he was returning from the yacht to the Hague, a great many people of my Lord Portland's train, the governor of his son and the governess of his daughters, were seen by Huygens waiting among others at Maesland-Sluys, and he got them on to his boat. The fact of their being there shows that Portland's family accompanied him at least occasionally to Holland, when he was to be absent on a campaign.

The King sailed on November 18 (N.S.) and made a record passage.[1] Parliament, as the King had said to Heinsius, was well disposed and readily voted liberal supplies for the army and navy. The King wrote to Heinsius that the expenses for the war by land and sea had been established to his contentment, although now the means of raising the money had to be found, which was always difficult. On December 22 the Triennial Bill received the Royal Assent, "which if he had not done that day it is very probable he would never have passed it,"

[1] "I have had the good fortune to land at Margate at midday to-day having had the most comfortable and best passage that I could have wished."—Heinsius, November 9 (19), p. 366.

says Burnet, for he was absorbed in a private anxiety. The Queen was struck down by the fatal scourge that had deprived William of Orange of his father and his mother, and had left him with a sickly and enfeebled constitution. When smallpox declared itself the King was inconsolable and distraught. He had learnt to appreciate at their true worth the strong understanding, the wise judgment and beauty of character which illuminate the pages of Mary's private diaries, and are reflected in those of her faithful and devoted servant, Bishop Burnet. The King's proud and cold reserve broke down, he gave way to passionate and unrestrained grief. Calling Burnet into his closet, he burst into tears, exclaiming that "from being the most happy he was now going to be the most miserable creature on earth." "During the whole of their marriage," he added, "he had never known one single fault in her." During her illness "he was in an agony that amazed us all, fainting often, and breaking out into most violent lamentations." After the Queen's death it was feared he was following her. For many weeks he was "incapable of attending to business or seeing company." [1] Huygens, anxious and sorrowful, for the Queen had always been his gracious and kind friend, went to Kensington a few days after her death. William was shut into his bedchamber. The Queen's body was embalmed and an attendant told Huygens that he had "opened the windows of the antechamber a little to let out the bad air." On repeated visits Huygens was denied admittance, Keppel sending out letters to be copied. He seems to have been continually with the King. Only once is Portland mentioned as having "had words" with "Myl Mongrasse whom he hindered from going in to see the King, saying 'qu'on tenoit le Roy enfermé.'" On January 15 (25) a clerk repeated to the assiduous conscientious Huygens that Keppel had said, "What is that old man here for every post day, the King will still see nobody and do nothing, when he is seeing people again he will send for them." Early in February the King went to Richmond for a few days. A deep snow had fallen, and was heaped up higher than the coaches in the city.

[1] Burnet's *History of His Own Time*.

NOTE.—On March 4 Huygens went to the lying-in-state at Whitehall and in the great throng of people he lost his watch, his pocket being rather wide and the key hanging out as usual.

A great armchair was made of it. On February 8 Huygens was admitted to Kensington to do business with the King, "who was kind."

There can be no more touching letters in history than those that William wrote after his wife's death to the two men in whom, besides Bentinck, he had the most confidence, the Prince de Vaudemont and Heinsius. To the Prince he wrote, on January 3, what seems to be his earliest letter after the Queen's death:

"If in the desolation in which I am after my irreparable loss I were able to feel any consolation it would assuredly be in the manner in which you share it, but I cannot have any, except in heaven, in the hope of the life to come. As for the world it is no longer anything to me. If it pleases the Good God that I should live to return to Holland, I hope to see you there, and to talk to you about what you have written, be assured in whatever state I may be I am always yours till my death. G."

To Heinsius he wrote nearly three weeks later, when he was forcing himself to attend to business:

"Kensington, January 22 (February 1).

"The irreparable loss with which the Good God has been pleased to chastise me has rendered me incapable of writing to you, and till now of doing any but a little business, and it is not without much trouble that I can write now."

He expresses a hope that the negotiations with Molo may be forwarded as much as possible, and the letter concludes:

"but I must tell you in confidence that now I no longer find myself able to wage war; I shall all the same endeavour, as much as in me lies to do my duty, hoping that the Good God will give me the strength therefore."

A few days later he wrote from Richmond, January 25 (February 4):

"I retired here some days ago in order to breathe the air, but it is so cruelly cold that I have little benefit from it. To-morrow I go again to Kensington, there I think that the stones fly against my head."

In Holland itself the grief at the Queen's death was deeply and universally felt, "'tis impossible for me to tell you the sorrow that reigns universally in Holland," wrote the cynical Prior to Lord Lexington, "there people, who never had any passions before, are now touched, and marble weeps."

That William Bentinck remained at hand during the early days of the King's mourning is testified by two letters that he wrote to Lord Lexington : [1]

"Kensington, January 15 (25).

"You will not be surprised at my long silence when you learn the cause. The sad loss which we have sustained by the death of the Queen has quite overwhelmed me. Apart from the interest which I take in all that concerns the King and the public, I and my family have lost as it were everything, and I assure you that I can scarcely recover myself. No one in the world can have been more generally regretted ; the King is inconsolable, and indeed we have had great cause to be alarmed for his health. Thank God this fear is now passed, and the strength of feeling and of reason, which caused him fully to appreciate the extent of his loss, now begins to enable him to bear it with resignation and patience. One consolation remains to us in our misfortune—our enemies will gain nothing by it either here or abroad. It seems indeed to have roused the spirit of all."

Bentinck accompanied the King to Richmond, whence he wrote again to Lexington :

"The King has come here in this bitterly cold weather, while Kensington is hung with black, in order that he may

[1] Envoy Extraordinary to the Imperial Court at Vienna, *Lexington Papers.*

not hear the noise.[1] He returns to-morrow, and the day after will admit everyone to see him. I forgot to answer you with respect to Sir James Montgomery, whom we had thought to be in the other world for some time; but if he be still in this, his Majesty would wish you (in case he should fall into your hands) to think of some way of sending him here in safety." [2]

The King was so far recovered at Richmond as to go out shooting in the Park. He "diverted himself with shooting flying on horseback." He returned to Kensington on January 26. The day before Nottingham had already announced in the House of Lords that the King would be going abroad for the next campaign, and that it would thus be necessary to make arrangements for the government of the country in his absence. The Queen's Lying-in-State at Whitehall began on February 21; her funeral took place in Westminster Abbey on March 5, a great snow falling, "so that the ladies had but draggled trains by the time they got thither."

[1] Luttrell, iii. 430. Thursday, January 24.—"Yesterday his majestie after dinner, attended by his Guards, having in the coach with him the Earls of Scarborough and Portland, went to the house of one Mr. Lattin in Richmond Park, where he will continue till Saturday evening to give opportunity to put Kensington House into 'mourning.'"

[2] This letter, *Lexington Papers*, January 25 (February 4), 1695, p. 50, contains an allusion to Montgomery, who had discovered the plot to Portland. Lord Balcarres told James II. that something which had passed in private rendered Sir James Montgomery peculiarly obnoxious to the King.

CHAPTER IX

1695–1696

EAST INDIA COMPANY—CAMPAIGNS OF 1695—ASSASSINATION PLOT

PARLIAMENTARY quarrels, which besides exposing the venality of Ministers touched the honour of Portland and even of the King, delayed further the departure to Holland. The Speaker, Sir John Trevor, a Tory, was the instrument by which Caermarthen carried out his system of bribery in the House of Commons. It appeared that he himself was not above suspicion. The Whigs, on examining the accounts of the City of London, and the East India Company, which had succeeded in getting its Charter renewed after a prolonged contest, discovered that Trevor had taken a bribe of £1000 from the City for lending his interest to a local bill. Trevor, making illness an excuse, retired from his position to avoid expulsion, or as Mr. Vernon put it: "The Commons have spent three days in making the old Speaker sick of his place and choosing a new one."[1] Elated with their success, the Whigs went on to examine into the accounts of the East India Company. Sir Thomas Cook, who was at the head of it, owned to having spent large sums to secure the Charter, but refused to give an account. The Commons passed a Bill condemning him to refund the full amount of £80,000 or £90,000 of secret service money unless he confessed to whom it had been paid. In the Lords, Caermarthen, who was now Duke of Leeds, strongly opposed the bill.[2] A Committee of both Houses was appointed to inquire into the matter. It was about this time that Portland wrote to Lexington: "They are likely to push still further their inquiries . . . which may touch their own members. It

[1] Vernon to Lexington, p. 69.

[2] A large sum of money was traced to a confidential servant of the Duke's. Articles of Impeachment were made out, but the witness on whose evidence all depended escaped to Holland. The Duke retired from public life.

reminds me of a party, who having got drunk together, quarrel, and separate with bloody noses."

Meanwhile it began to be whispered about by the enemies of the Court that Portland and the King were incriminated.[1] The result of the inquiry was a triumphant vindication of both. It appeared that whereas in the reign of Charles and James the King had received an annual present from the Company, in the case of William even this had not been done for some years. Further, Wharton announced that he had to name a noble Lord, but not to his dishonour. It was the Earl of Portland. To him had been offered the great sum of £50,000. He refused to accept it with decision, and said to those who offered it that he would be the enemy and opponent of whoever made such an attempt again. The contemptuous indifference with which Bentinck regarded the incident appears from the following letter to Lord Lexington :

"Kensington, April 23 (May 3).

"I fear that it may delay the departure of the King for some days, otherwise I should be very glad that they should investigate this affair to the very bottom, particularly as there are malicious people who, judging me by themselves, think that it is impossible that I could be proof against £50,000, and have taken the liberty to make use of my name to hide their own knavery. It is annoying to be exposed to such an accusation here, where corruption is too general. There is a Spanish proverb which says that 'it is hard to be beaten with the spit, when you have not eaten the roast.' I am much obliged to you for your intention of sending me some wine. I assure you that your health will not be forgotten when I receive it, but I do not know, when I have got it, if I shall not be guilty of bribery : however I will accept and drink it at all events."[2]

When this business was concluded the King left for Holland.

Preparations for the campaign of 1695 had not been intermitted though tentative peace negotiations were conducted at the same time. Molo's reports were to be communicated to Bentinck. By this means France signified

[1] Burnet.

[2] *Lexington Papers*, p. 80.

her willingness to discuss terms through the Ambassadors of England and Holland, and to this end Dykvelt met the Frenchmen Harlay and Callières at Maestricht in August 1694. Louis XIV. meanwhile allowed these facts to become known. Dykvelt reassured Auersperg as to the loyalty of William to the Grand Alliance, while Kaunitz, Imperial Ambassador at the Hague, appealed to the King to know the truth of these rumours. The King replied that he was only waiting for definite information, which should be imparted to the Ambassador by the Pensionary. He added that for his part he had expected intelligence as to the communications passing between an Imperial emissary and the French Abbé Morel in Switzerland. Thus were sown the first seeds of mistrust between William and the Emperor.[1]

However great his private disinclination for business, William was soon forced to take up again the threads of his foreign policy. It could devolve upon no other hands. So involved were they that when Lexington in Vienna sent home dispatches to the Secretary of State, Shrewsbury, he actually pleaded his entire ignorance of foreign affairs, and consequent incapacity for dealing with them. Further than this, Portland took Lexington's reports to the Imperial Ambassador Auersperg and said that as neither he nor the King could read them, he had orders to request that they might be translated from Latin into French; it was undesirable that they should go through any other hands.[2] It was unsafe to risk the transmission of important secrets by an English Minister to Versailles by way of St. Germains.

After his wife's death the King's character was to some extent changed. He became less accessible, more silent, more irascible. The strain of the war was telling on his delicate physique, the nervous shock of his bereavement seems to have left him less capable of dominating the situation. This

[1] There was now a hostile party at Vienna, headed by the Governor of the King of the Romans, Prince Salm, connected with the Stuarts through his marriage with a Palatinate Princess. Klopp, vi. 362.

Note.—Writing to Heinsius just after the Queen's death, William says that the negotiations with Molo are to be continued. Later on, February 22 (March 4), he adds that it may be insinuated to the French that Dykvelt is authorised to state his ultimatum, but this is to be done through Daguerre and not Molo. It appears from a still later letter written to Heinsius in April that Molo was spreading false reports in Amsterdam calculated to throw doubts upon the King's integrity.

[2] Klopp, vii. 29. Auersperg, January 22 (February 1), 1695. Lexington, p. 40. Shrewsbury, January 8 (18), 1695.

year, 1695, and the following one this inability often appears in his dealings with the Allies. The words he had written to Heinsius after the Queen's death were more than true at the moment. He no longer had the same zeal for the war, he wanted peace. The foreign policy becomes more and more involved in secret and tentative conversations of a semi-official nature. With these Portland is often so intimately connected that it is necessary at least to indicate them briefly. The King was now seeking some common ground. He insisted on the recognition by France of his own title to the English Crown as a preliminary. The Emperor insisted on the restitution of Strasburg. William would have preferred an equivalent to this.

In February he had a long and secret interview with Auersperg, at which even Portland was not present. William expressed the belief that the enemy could continue the war some time longer by remaining on the defensive.[1] For Holland its continuation was impossible. Auersperg was left with the impression that love of Holland's interests was the actuating motive in the King's desire for peace.

When the Congress of the Allies met at the Hague in July the Alliance was reaffirmed.

Later on the Imperial Ambassador sought out Portland at Headquarters. All letters from Paris, he said, affirmed that Callières was in Holland. Hence arose the suspicion of fresh conferences. He had been some time at the Hague and had been referred to the King for information. Now after three weeks spent at Headquarters he was still patiently waiting for a reply. In England the King seemed anxious for peace. But though Vienna had agreed to everything and only waited for a final agreement none was forthcoming. Portland replied that since that conversation the position had greatly changed in favour of the Allies. Here indeed, he added, it appears that the Ambassadors consider it the chief function of their office to show continual mistrust.

[1] The King's summary of the position is instructive :

(1) Spain was a negligible quantity and must be treated and considered as a child.

(2) The Emperor, handicapped by the Turkish war, could not take decisive action on the Rhine.

(3) The German Princes were rather a burden than a help.

(4) England could continue the war some time longer, it was true, but it became increasingly difficult of accomplishment. For Holland it was impossible.

"But I ask you," he continued with some warmth, "whether mistrust should arise against a King who daily risks his own person in the common cause?" Auersperg protested his full confidence in the King, but he added a request that the King of Sweden might be informed they were not averse from his mediation. This put Portland in an embarrassing position. William had now apparently decided against Swedish intervention, but had yet to prevail upon Leopold to adopt his point of view. Portland was unable to give any definite answer and things continued on this unsatisfactory footing.

In the campaign of 1695 the war had entered upon a fresh phase. The great French General Luxemburg was dead and his place was very inadequately taken by Villeroy in Flanders, the chief centre of war. The French, under the command of Boufflers, guarded the Sambre. William was anxious to recover Namur, which had been additionally strengthened by Vauban. He had returned to Flanders in June. William Bentinck was with him, and in the face of the approaching campaign the King seemed to recover something of his health and spirits. He was in high good humour and actively engaged in reviewing the infantry. While the Court was lodged in the large modern château of the Count de Besselaer, William one day looked into the chapel and laughed heartily on finding that the Secretary Huygens had been given house-room in it.

The King at this time often spent whole days in the company of the Prince de Vaudemont. William's affection for and confidence in him were shared by Bentinck, who this summer begins a correspondence with the Prince which lasted some years. He writes from the "Camp de Corbais," June 25, 1695:

"Although your Highness has done me the honour to express the wish that I should write to you, I have not done so up to the present, having no topic to discuss. The precipitate march of the enemy's army, and their recrossing the Sambre the same day that we marched here, and of which they had warning, is a step which shows that they do not wish to risk anything."

Bentinck, however, was of opinion that they were always in a position to repass the river in safety:

"The thing we have most to fear is from Piedmont, although I own that there seems to me little appearance of the Duke of Savoy's having done what he is generally believed and feared to have done, and made a separate treaty. What M. de Catinat offers him is less than he has offered hitherto. Pignerol is not mentioned. France wishes to retain some strong places and oblige the Duke to make war on the Allies. It seems to me that so far as we know the Duke of Savoy is a prince who has much courage and firmness, who has as much wisdom as astuteness, and who has already shown us that he has trifled with France more than once by the appearance of making terms in order to gain time. It seems to me that one ought not to suspect him of committing an unworthy action contrary to his interest and honour by abandoning his allies and submitting to the tender mercies of France."

On June 27 the King wrote to Heinsius that he had resolved to besiege Namur. Orders were given to march on the morrow, an opportunity for taking the city having arrived. The Brandenburg General Heyden was ordered to march on the Mehaigne to the support of Athlone. A difference between the two soldiers, both of whom claimed the supreme command, caused a delay, which enabled Boufflers to throw himself into the city with his troops, bringing the force available for its defence up to 14,000 men.[1] Thus the personal vanity of two men resulted in a prolonged siege and a great loss of life. William's bitter resentment at the lost opportunity was described by Portland to Auersperg. "But why is it," asked the Ambassador, "that the King does not make the Brandenburger General feel his anger openly before all the world?" "He cannot," replied Portland, "because he may need him still further, also the question arises whether Athlone is wholly without blame."

Within a few hours of Boufflers's entry the besieging army had surrounded the city. The Elector of Bavaria was with William. De Vaudemont remained in Flanders to watch Villeroy, but had insufficient numbers to hold him and was obliged to retreat. Villeroy took the towns of Dixmuyde and Deynse and sent their garrisons to France,

[1] Auersperg, July 7 and 10.

contrary to the terms of capitulation. After bombarding Brussels, he approached Namur in the hope of raising the siege, but feared to give battle and withdrew. William Bentinck had written to the Prince de Vaudemont while the issue still remained doubtful.

"The Camp before Namur, July 14, 1695.

"The letter of your Highness to the King causes us much disquietude, may the Good God bless you and give you success. We wait for news of you with great impatience. Although M. de Villeroy has greatly the superiority in numbers we are slow to believe that he will attack us."

The same day he wrote to Shrewsbury:

"I send you herewith the copies of some letters in cipher, from the King of France to Marshal Boufflers at Namur, which fell into our hands. I beg you to have them deciphered by Dr. Wallis and send them back as soon as possible.

"Our siege advances against the town. We spare our people as much as we can, so that we have not lost more than three men each night, during the three nights that the trenches have been opened. Our breaching batteries of heavy cannon and our mortars will open to-morrow. We expect any moment the news of a battle in Flanders, since our intelligence last night was that Marshal Villeroy was marching directly to our army to engage it, and his vanguard was only half a league distant. God give us success."

William wrote himself on July 11 (21) to say that the enemy's lines had been forced, and he hoped soon to be master of the town, though the siege of the citadel would take up more time.

On July 28 the King writes that "the siege does not progress as expeditiously as I could wish. It is very grievous to lose so many brave men, but it cannot be avoided in a siege like this."

August 4. "I would not omit informing you myself that we obtained possession of the place this afternoon."

The next day Portland wrote to Lexington (from the Camp before Namur, August 5) :

" We have been, I may say, night and day in the trenches and on horseback. You will have heard of the treason or cowardice, or both, of the garrisons of Dixmuyde and Deynse : but thank God we are masters of the town and the King is well."

A few days later he wrote to Shrewsbury :

" Camp before the Citadel of Namur, August 15 (25).

" The King having slept little last night and been on horseback the whole day, has ordered me to tell you, Sir, that it is impossible for him to write this evening. Affairs here are at a great crisis. The siege of the citadel advances rapidly, the breach begins to be practicable, and I think a little time will render us masters of it, unless the enemy succour it by gaining a battle, since they approach us with a very numerous army. We will endeavour to render the enterprise as difficult as possible."

To which Shrewsbury replied very properly, " Our wishes and prayers are for your safety and mine particularly for your Lordship."

Boufflers held out in the citadel for some weeks longer, but when Villeroy, finding the Allies too well posted, had withdrawn, Lord Portland summoned the city to surrender. Bentinck sent an account of the siege to Lexington [1] from the Camp near Namur.

" On the 30th of August we assaulted the Castle and won the counter scarps. On the 1st of this month the enemy offered us to capitulate. They, yesterday, gave up the outworks to us in the presence of an army consisting of more than 100 battalions, and 200 squadron of horse. The besieged quit the place the day after to-morrow. The enemy [2]

[1] *Lexington Papers*, p. 105 and p. 114. Mr. Stepney who was present gives a most interesting account of the final attack to Lexington, written from the King's camp at the Abbey of Maloigne, in the gardens of which Portland's tent was pitched.

[2] Under Villeroy. Boufflers was arrested by Portland as he was leaving Namur for France. Portland and Dykvelt advanced to meet him

retreated as soon as they learned that the place had surrendered, that is yesterday at noon. They marched the whole of the night in haste and disorder, and are still in disorder, and are still in motion. Before we lost sight of them yesterday we saluted them with three salvoes of all our artillery and with that of the army, in honour of this happy success for which God be thanked. If this good news does not satisfy you, I will put another grain in the scale, and tell you that our fleet has avenged, in part, on Calais the bombardment of Brussels." [1]

Portland does not mention the arrest of Boufflers in this letter, as it took place after the garrison had marched out. The prisoners of Dixmuyde and Deynse were treated "very barbarously," and kept in dungeons with hardly bread and water. Boufflers was the first Marshal of France who had ever surrendered a fortress. "He was created a Duke, but he became the butt of his countrymen from poets to porters and fishwomen," says St. Simon.

Bentinck writes in Camp on September 9 to the Prince de Vaudemont at 9 o'clock in the evening : [2]

at the head of three battalions, and told him they were ordered to arrest him by the King of England, until his master made satisfaction for detaining the garrisons of Dixmuyde and Deynse, but if he would give security they should be exchanged, he should be set at liberty, "which put him into a passion, saying he could not do it, whereupon he was sent prisoner to Maestricht."—Luttrell, iii. 521.

[1] Portland also sent an account of the siege to Lord Shrewsbury. "Sir,—Although I know that his Majesty has written to you himself and that Mr. Blaithwayt has acquainted you with all that has passed, I cannot avoid congratulating you and rejoicing with you on the capture of Namur, and the citadel defended by 14,000 men, and that in sight of a hostile army of 100,000 men. This is so glorious a conquest and at the same time so advantageous that I think it has not been equalled for many years. It will greatly change the aspect of affairs, and put us in a condition to make either peace or war better, without suffering terms to be imposed on us as France has hitherto done. The English have greatly signalised themselves in this siege by their share in the vigorous actions which have occurred, in which they have been too much animated by the presence of the King himself. But thank God he is still very well and I hope this success will shorten the campaign, and we shall have the happiness of seeing you sooner in England than in former years, when the King may enjoy a little rest; for the fatigue he has suffered is incredible, as well as the care and trouble he has undergone and has been able to support. P.S.—His Majesty has arrested Marshal Boufflers till the King of France restores those of his subjects who have been made prisoners at Dixmude and Deynse."

[2] Egerton MSS. translated from the French.

"The letters that your Highness has done me the honour to send me strongly justify the arrest of the Marshal de Boufflers. It is uncertain whether it will remedy the hardship that our prisoners suffer from the enemy; but it appears sufficiently evident that if he had not been arrested, all our soldiers would have been forced to take service among them [the French] in despair."

Soon after the fall of Namur the King returned to Loo. In October he was again in England, and he came back on the high tide of popularity that followed on his successful campaign. He made a triumphal progress through the country, doing his best to overcome his natural reserve and appear genial. William Bentinck accompanied him, and for a second time they visited the University of Oxford, where they had come as boys on their first visit to England in 1670. They arrived on November 8 from Woodstock and were received by the Chancellor, James Butler, Duke of Ormond, with the Doctors and masters. Shrewsbury as well as Bentinck was in attendance on the King, who went straight to the Sheldonian, and seated in his chair of State "put off his hat and looked round the theatre and on the top on the painting." During the performance of some music, Ormond, kneeling in his doctor's robes, presented the King with a large Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, and an illustrated history of Oxford.[1] He was then invited to descend to the area to partake of a rich banquet. The University had been at a great charge to do honour to William. They sent "The inferior beadle to London, to provide all rarities that could be, were at great charge"—but the King went straight out with Portland to his coach in waiting near the theatre door, and went by way of Holywell over Magdalen Bridge towards Windsor, an entirely characteristic but tactless ungraciousness which had on this occasion untoward results, for while the masters, bachelors and undergraduates remained decorously in their places, "some ordinary people in the area rudely scambed away all the banquet and sweetmeats and drank all the wine."

Portland had written to tell his secretary van Leeuwen that the King would be at Windsor on November 19, and van Leeuwen gave this intelligence to Huygens, who

[1] *Oxonia Illustrata.*

accordingly hastened thither in his calèche, stopping to eat at the village of Hounslow on the way. He put up at the house of a woman who gave him a good bed without a mattress in a very little room, and drinking a cup of chocolate he went to bed early, for he was very tired, and the King did not arrive till eight the same evening. Poor Huygens had now definitely lost the Royal favour. The reason for this does not appear, though he hints at its being due to Keppel, who no doubt wanted to advance his own creatures, and preferred to keep at a distance a man so much in the King's confidence as Huygens had been. At any rate the old charming relationship of master and servant had changed. The time had gone when the King, calling Huygens into his closet, would inquire kindly after his personal comfort, or his people at home, would condole with him on their common exile from their own country. The poor secretary, whose health besides seems to have been failing, felt the change deeply and bitterly. He was no longer sent for by the King; any work he had to do was done through the medium of Keppel or another secretary. His alienation from the King's favour drew him closer to Lord Portland, who seems to have felt for him and to have frequently done him little kindnesses, as if there were a certain unexpressed fellow-feeling between them.

The next morning, after their arrival at Windsor, Portland sent for Huygens at 10.30, saying that if he will come to him they will go together to the King. Huygens found Lord Portland lodged with "the Concierge Randu" in a very little room, where he was dressing, several people being at his "lever." They afterwards went together to the Queen's quarters to make a list of the best pictures to be removed to Kensington to the new quarters made last summer. Later on Huygens was sent for to the New Gallery at Kensington; the King came by, to inspect it, but merely told Huygens to sort out the little pictures from among the big ones, "and passed on with Keppel." The poor secretary, longing for a kind word the while, was made more unhappy when one of Portland's secretaries, Hennin, told him how d'Alonne was agitating to get put into the secretariat with him, "a very quick clever man," added Hennin. "This troubled me, for I considered it as a sequence to things I had already observed," notes Huygens cautiously. The rather unsatisfactory Mevrouw Huygens, when she heard of it, was of opinion that such

a thing befalling her husband would oblige him to quit, for if d'Alonne was coming in to serve next him and share the income, "I should not have enough to keep house and support the expenses of the campaign." This weighing much on his mind, Huygens determined to confide in Portland. In the morning he went to Kensington, and having learned that Portland was with the King in Council, hung about till he came out, ostensibly to speak about the pictures, but took the opportunity of asking for a private word with him, and began to tell him of the d'Alonne business. Lord Portland assured Huygens that this was the first he had heard of it, but while they were talking the "quick and clever" d'Alonne himself, scenting his own interests at stake, came up behind unseen by Huygens, and Lord Portland, "as though in order to caution me, pushed me softly backwards, and so we spoke no further."

Lord Portland seems to have been superintending the rehanging of the King's pictures, in which he was much interested, so that Huygens was brought into contact with him, but it was not till December that he had another opportunity of mentioning his own affairs, when one afternoon they were discussing pictures, originals and copies, in the antechamber. Huygens referred to d'Alonne's pretensions to his office. "Now what sort of a fool has put that into your head?" said Lord Portland. Huygens replied that it came from people of consideration out of his Excellency's own house. "I haven't a wise man in my whole house, so how can that be?" inquired his Excellency genially, and then again they were unfortunately interrupted. So that Huygens remained in a state of suspense, brooding over his altered circumstances and "continually very melancholy, turning over what would be best to say to my Lord Portland to report to the King."

Bentinck had his own private troubles. His daughter Belletje had been seized with some kind of fit. Court gossip was busy with the continually increasing ascendancy of Keppel. One day, when the King had "done almost nothing," the secretary learns in explanation that he had dined with Keppel the day before and drunk more than usual. Huygens, going to Court in some inconvenience from a swelled foot, finds his friend Van Loon, who promises to send him a plaister the next day that will cure it, and adds slyly that "Portland and some others are suffering in their

WILLIAM BENTINCK.

From a painting at Welbeck Abbey.

BARONESS BENTINCK OF DIEPENHEIM, MOTHER OF THE EARL OF PORTLAND.

From a painting at Middachten.

LADY PORTLAND.

From the painting by Simon du Bois at Middachten.

LADY MARY BENTINCK.

From the painting by Constantine Netscher at Middachten.

feet from *new shoes*." All these straws showed which way the wind was blowing before the storm came.

The new Parliament, which met towards the end of November, had a large Whig majority favourable to the war. Union and good will on the part of both Government and people were peculiarly essential at the moment, since the new Parliament had to undertake the important work of the restoration of the currency. A Recoinage Bill was passed on January 21. The next day an unimportant but unfortunate incident occurred again to embitter the happy relations of the King and his people. He had wished to signalise his appreciation of Portland's great and invaluable services still further by the grant of an estate in Denbighshire. Both Whigs and Tories had been filled with resentment at the King's previous gifts to his Dutch favourite, but William had a perfect right to dispose as he pleased of the hereditary domains of the Crown. Now, however, local opposition to the alienation of these lands was sufficiently strong to get an Address requesting the King to stop the grant passed in Parliament. The resolution passed without opposition, and the Address was presented to the King at Kensington by the Commons. Hoffmann,[1] Imperial Resident in London, expressed the opinion that the fact that the Resolution for the Address passed without opposition was a most fortunate thing for Lord Portland, for every word in his favour would have produced replies, which could only have made the position worse for him. Trumball replied to the King in this sense when he expressed his dissatisfaction that no voice had been raised in Portland's defence. "Silence was the best service that we could do your Majesty in this cause." For the opponents were prepared for that, and might have carried matters to an impeachment. The King was deeply incensed, but Bentinck begged that he might not come between him and the English people. The situation called for all the caution and tact of which William was master. He replied to the Commons with great dignity that though he had for the Earl of Portland an attachment won by long and faithful service, yet he would never have made the grant of these lands if he had thought the House of Commons would have been troubled by it. He would now withdraw the gift and find some other means of making an acknowledgment to

[1] Klopp, vii. 151–2. Hoffmann, January 27, 1696. Auersperg, January 27.

him.[1] The occurrence should have ended with this graceful concession on the part of the King, but some members of the Lower House tried to throw suspicion on Portland of having taken bribes in connection with the Scottish East India Company, which had been founded the year before.

No basis for this was forthcoming, and the ill-feeling caused by this humiliating business was fortunately transmuted into a wave of enthusiastic popularity for the King by the discovery of the Assassination Plot, the most dangerous of all the many conspiracies against William's life. It was only a part of a larger scheme for an insurrection supported by a French army commanded by the Duke of Berwick.[2] Louis XIV. had been misled by James II. into supposing that the English Jacobites were ready to rise before the French troops landed. The scheme of invasion was pretty generally known among the English Jacobites, but only a few were trusted with the more perilous secret of the Assassination Plot, and they were too many for its success. The plot was well laid: a sufficient number of men were to be ambushed at Turnham Green to overpower and murder the King and his Guards on their return from hunting. Its execution was entrusted to a certain Jacobite agent and ex-soldier, George Barclay. With him were associated Charnock (a former fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford), Porter and Goodmen, two men of ill reputation, and Sir John Fenwick, who had long ago been guilty of public insolence to the Queen at a moment of great danger and difficulty.[3] Barclay from the first distrusted a certain Captain Fisher, who was concerned in the conspiracy, and avoided confiding much to him. It was this Fisher who acquainted Bentinck with the existence of the plot early in February. He would give no names that could lead to its detection, and immediately absconded. Barclay also distrusted Porter, who was garrulous in his cups. Meanwhile the scheme was completed and the date fixed for February 15. The spot chosen was a narrow lane with hedges on either side; a given signal was to summon the assassins from their hiding-places, when the King crossed the river on his way back from Richmond.

At the last moment, however, Porter took into his confidence an Irish Catholic Jacobite called Pendergrass. Captain Pendergrass, unfortunately for the conspirators, was an

[1] The Commons were undoubtedly in the right in principle.
[2] Natural son of James II. and Arabella Churchill. [3] See Macaulay.

honourable man. He hastened to warn Bentinck of the imminent danger of the King and begged that he would prevent his hunting the following day. William was by this time too accustomed to plots against his life to take the matter seriously, and only in deference to the most earnest entreaties of Bentinck consented to postpone his hunting for a week. The conspirators, learning of the delay from one of their spies from Kensington Palace, attributed it to some temporary indisposition of the King. During this week yet another informer came to bring news of the intended assassination. At last the King was convinced there was something in it. Sending for Pendergrass, he interviewed him in the presence of Bentinck and John Cutts. William appealed to him as a man of honour to reveal the names of the conspirators, since "the life he had saved could not be preserved unless the persons were known who had contrived to take it away." Late at night he consented to give a list of names. The next morning, January 22, the news of the King's hunting being again postponed so alarmed the astute Barclay that he promptly escaped to France, the suspicions of the other conspirators were lulled, and several of the leaders were arrested.

A very interesting and detailed letter from Portland to Lexington gives an account of the Assassination Plot.

"Kensington, March 3 (13), 1696.

"You will have been extremely surprised to learn the peril to which we have been exposed. We were on the brink of a precipice, and ready to fall, when, by a manifest interposition of Providence we were made aware of the danger which threatened us and all Europe. On Thursday, the 13th (23rd) a man whom I knew (Fisher) came to tell me that on the Saturday following (the 15th) his Majesty would be attacked and assassinated by forty-six men, the greater part of whom had been in the service of King James . . . who had been sent from France for the purpose. He further stated that his Majesty would be attacked at Turnham Green, on his return from hunting, when his escort would consist of 24 men. I immediately gave notice to the King of the information I had received, but he would not believe it. The following Friday (the 14th) at 9 o'clock in the evening,

a man whom I did not know, but who had been a Captain of Cavalry in Ireland, came to me at Whitehall, where I fortunately was, having been detained by business. He informed me that the King would be assassinated the next day; that he himself was one of the conspirators; that the plan was so arranged that it could not (humanly speaking) fail to succeed; that the moment the fatal blow was given, there would be a general insurrection of all the Jacobites and Roman Catholics in the Kingdom, and that King James was ready to embark at Calais with a French army to invade England. I immediately set off hither to see the King, who was on the point of retiring to bed, and intending to hunt the next day, had already ordered his carriages and guards for the morning, and dinner to be prepared for him at Richmond. His Majesty, however, altered his plans and determined on remaining here. Two days afterwards two other persons came to me, who confirmed in every particular the information which I had previously received, and further stated that the conspirators, having failed in their intended blow, had determined on making the attempt the following Saturday. The names of many of them were known, and all who could be found were immediately seized. They have already been examined, some have confessed, and all will be tried in a few days. At the same time we received information from Flanders that the enemy had collected a great body of troops at Dunkirk and Calais, as well as a large number of transport vessels and ships of war, that the troops were either on board or being embarked, and that it was well known there that they were assembled for the invasion of England."

After describing the measures taken for the defence of England, the letter concludes:

"I do not believe that times past can afford us an example of so horrible and treacherous an attempt at murder, recognised and sanctioned as this has been by a public authority. All the conspirators who have made any disclosure or confession allege that they had an order from King James, in

his own handwriting, authorising them to strike the blow; and this statement is confirmed by the fact that he sent officers and guards from France to take part in the abominable attempt, from the success of which Providence has saved us almost by a miracle. The danger is past, but I tremble when I reflect on the atrocity of the scheme, and the state to which all the Allies would have been reduced had it succeeded. I should have been in the same carriage with the King, and should have shared his fate; but death would have been preferable to slavery under enemies so barbarous and inhuman."

Porter turned King's evidence, and by this means several of the leaders were arrested, including Sir John Fenwick, whose accusations against prominent men were so serious that his trial was postponed till the following August. With regard to his confession the King wrote to Portland:

"Friday at 3. I am well content that you should promise pardon to Porter if he is willing to confess frankly all he knows of the conspiracy, although I had believed there were two witnesses against him. You must arrange this with my Lord Shrewsbury and Secretary Trumbul."

The following letter is also undated, but it appears to have been written about the same time, which points to Shrewsbury's having already taken fright at the very mention of the words "King's evidence."

"4 o'clock. I send you a letter which I have just had from my Lord Shrewsbury, and although I have told you that I foresaw what has come to pass, it is very vexatious to have someone always threatening to be on the move. Please communicate this letter to my Lord Sunderland before you come here at 7 o'clock this evening in order to ascertain how he thinks I should answer it. I think that at present it concerns his reputation and interest as much as mine that he should not quit my service at this juncture.[1] Vernon will go to find him to-morrow. G."

[1] By so doing Shrewsbury would obviously betray consciousness of guilt.

To the Prince de Vaudemont, Bentinck writes :

"Kensington, March 6 (16), 1696.[1]

"I imagine the joy that your Highness will have felt that the Good God discovered to us the most abominable conspiracy of which one has ever heard, and particularly that it appears clearly to have been supported by public authority ; and that the descent was dependent on the success of this horrible assassination and the subsequent insurrection that it would produce in these kingdoms which was hatched long since, the confusion that it would cause in these countries apparently made them judge the thing feasible, for without that how is it possible ? They cannot fail to know that we are not entirely deprived of ships to intercept their transportation of troops, since in so short a time his Majesty has sent Admiral Russell with a fleet of 72 ships to the coast of France, which only wait for the same wind that was favourable to our enemies to lead them into England. . . . The Good God will turn all to the confusion of our enemies. This will be a pretty incident in the history of the King of France. We must observe well what explanation they will give to this design, to dissemble before the world about their intentions. I imagine that the satisfaction that your Highness will have had about this will contribute to some extent to the re-establishment of your health.[2] I am delighted to learn that it permits you to go at this season into Flanders without inconvenience."

[1] Egerton MSS. 24205.
[2] De Vaudemont had been ill of a fever.

CHAPTER X

1696–1697

BENTINCK RAISES A LOAN FROM THE BANK OF ENGLAND—HE DECIDES TO LEAVE THE KING'S SERVICE

In May the King sailed for Holland. On the wave of loyalty caused by the Assassination Plot, Parliament had voted a liberal grant for the war; but it was questionable how much of it would be forthcoming, and in this season's campaign the action of both armies was paralysed for want of ready money. Some months earlier Secretary Trumball had told Auersperg that the English nation was tired of war. The imminence of the recent danger of assassination of the one man who stood between Europe and French domination had increased the desire for peace both at Vienna and the Hague. On his return to Holland William sent for the Ambassador of Savoy at the Hague, Della Torre, and instructed him to tell the Duke that it was necessary to make peace and that each ally must declare his claim on France. The King added that he would like to see Pignerol restored to Savoy, but he wished to know what would satisfy the Duke in the last resort. The Duke could not conclude from this that his chances of recovering Pignerol were very hopeful, and meanwhile the secret negotiations that had been so long on foot had bred distrust between William and the Emperor. Auersperg complains bitterly that the King was more reserved and less accessible than ever: "The more one presses him the less likely one is to receive an answer, one must seize an opportunity on the wing as it were." The Emperor feared that William would conclude a separate peace.

Savoy now seceded from the Allies and made his own terms with France. It was feared that Louis XIV. would withdraw his troops from this quarter and throw them into Belgium. It was a time of extreme anxiety for William, who had gone into Flanders in June; although the destruction

of the French magazine of stores and provender at Givet by Athlone and Cohorn had so crippled their resources that inaction was forced upon them; and it was believed that they had had orders to avoid an engagement. No acceptable proposals had yet been made by France through Callières, with whom negotiations were still on foot, and the King complained to Heinsius that he believed the slackness of Amsterdam in the matter was the cause that France either would not make terms or only bad ones. Meanwhile the King was at his wits' end for money. In July he wrote to Shrewsbury that "We have certainly lost the Duke of Savoy who has tricked us," but he still hoped to prevent the neutrality of Italy, the thing of all others most damaging to the allied cause. There was no prospect of peace "except on conditions that would be insupportable," and "no hopes of undertaking anything considerable this campaign." The King concludes: "We are here reduced to greater extremities than ever for want of money; and if we do not soon receive some remittances the army will be disbanded." To which the Secretary replied in an equally pessimistic strain, pointing out that "a willing parliament may pass Acts but I fear the money can neither be raised nor borrowed." [1]

At the end of the month the King wrote:

"I see no resource which can prevent the army from mutiny or total desertion; for it is more impossible to find here than in England, money sufficient for their subsistence. . . . In such great extremities, endeavours must be made to discover extraordinary remedies."

Shrewsbury, however, was not the man to discover extraordinary remedies. William, realising this, turned once again to the servant who by sheer weight of character always got things done. He wrote again to Shrewsbury:

"Camp of Atterre, July 21 (31).

"In the extremity to which we are reduced, I have been obliged to send the Earl of Portland to England, that he might represent it to you more particularly and consult with you, whether in this great necessity there is no other

[1] Coxe's *Shrewsbury*, p. 127.

remedy but that of convoking the parliament, if so, I give my consent, but I know the difficulty and even danger of assembling it during my absence; but rather than perish all must be risked. . . . For the rest I refer you to what the Earl of Portland will communicate to you and to the assurance he will give you of the continuance of my esteem."

There is an astonishing change in the tone of Shrewsbury's next letter. Galvanised into energy by Bentinck's presence, he writes almost hopefully, explaining that it was the general opinion that it would be highly inadvisable to call a session of Parliament, which had been prorogued till September 1, if only because in the condition of the currency at that moment it would raise hopes "that the standard should be advanced," hence "every man would keep what he had in his hands with reasonable hopes of parting with it *after* the Parliament upon better advantage," thus no ready money would be forthcoming.

Bentinck on his arrival hastened to acquaint the King with the position of affairs. His letter is dated July 28, from Whitehall: [1]

"After having written from off Dover I arrived there at noon and could not come here till Sunday morning. I found no one except my Lord Keeper, nearly everyone being still at Windsor, at the ceremony of the installation of the Duke of Gloucester which took place the day before yesterday.[2] I first made known my arrival to Lord Shrewsbury who returned the same day, and as my Lord Sunderland is not here, I followed him by an express. He replied to me from Althorp that he would be on the road as soon as possible but he could not be in town till to-morrow morning. On Monday morning I talked early with my L[d] Keeper [3] and my L[d] Shrewsbury together and communicated to

[1] Luttrell, iv. 90. He arrived from Flanders on Sunday morning, July 26, "whereupon the Lords Justices sat yesterday morning (27th) and the Council soon after."

[2] July 24. Luttrell, iv. 89. The Duke of Gloucester (Anne's son) was installed Knight Companion of the Garter in very great splendour at Windsor.

[3] Lord Keeper Somers. The Speaker, Paul Foley, together with Robert Harley, had proposed the establishment of the Land Bank. The necessary capital was never subscribed and the scheme was a failure.

them your Majesty's orders and the state of affairs in Flanders to which I found them fully alive. At 9. the Lords Justices assembled, and after having delivered my instructions and told them what your Majesty ordered me, I informed them of the necessitous condition of affairs in as urgent a manner as the occasion demanded. Everyone here is of opinion that all possible efforts are necessary and it was resolved that I should speak to those interested in the Land Bank, such as the Speaker, Harley, and others, . . . and that I should try to persuade them to raise their subscriptions of 12'50/m. pounds sterling before next Saturday; that I should tell other merchants to try all other ways of finding money; and that to give me time they would adjourn the Council which was already assembled, till this evening at 6 o'clock as they did not doubt that one or other means would succeed in finding money without assembling Parliament during your Majesty's absence which they thought too dangerous. They resolved to propose to the Council to prorogue it for a month, for even if it were necessary to assemble it, it would take 3 weeks to summon all the members."

After repeating in greater detail what Shrewsbury had already said, and explaining the difficulties that arose through the anticipated fluctuations of the currency, Bentinck continues, " and in proroguing Parliament for a month we shall only lose eight days in case all means of finding some [money] are unfruitful."

The same afternoon Bentinck interviewed the Speaker, Shrewsbury and Harley. The evening before they had held out hopes of being able to achieve success, but now they said clearly that it was impossible :

" . . . that several of their people [1] had gone off ill satisfied with the campaign, that others had disposed of their money, and that I had arrived eight days too late, that however although they have every ground of complaint over the treatment that they have received . . . yet they knew

[1] Intending subscribers to the Land Bank.

the evident danger in which your Majesty would find himself without money, and thus they will not now reflect on the past but will do everything possible to find the necessary money and that to this end they will work their hardest."

Meanwhile a small temporary expedient had been devised.

"It has been resolved to prepare a subscription by which the Lords Justices first of all, and then all the great officers and officials, will bind themselves to advance the money to your Majesty each one according to his ability to encourage the others to do also, as also the '10/m. livres St.' that is being sent by this post. [Note: £10,000.]

"My Lord Shrewsbury and My Lord Godolphin have made an appointment for me with 6 of the principal merchants, and have begged me to get Sir Josiah Child to come and try to arrange the thing with them, so that we doubt not, if God pleases, in one way or another your Majesty will be relieved of anxiety, for having several strings to our bow if one fails another will succeed."

Lord Shrewsbury wrote to the King on the same date in much the same strain.

William had evidently received the letters of this date when he replied to Bentinck from the Camp of Atterre August 3 (13), 1696. After expressing his pleasure at hearing of the safe arrival of his envoy the King continues:

"I think they have done very well to prorogue the Parliament till September 1, but I hope they will not be obliged to meet then, as it is impossible that I can be in England at that time, and I do not think anyone would advise its assembling in my absence. Although I greatly wish to have you near me, since they wish the same thing, I think it will be absolutely necessary that you should remain in England till something is arranged with regard to the money. Ask my Lords Shrewsbury and Sunderland what persons I should employ as ambassadors when a Congress assembles. Do not forget also to learn the views of my Lord Sunderland as to the Government of Ireland."

The King adds that he begins to think peace will be made, "which it is not advisable to say where you are," and he will be obliged to stay in Holland till peace is in train, or concluded.

The next day William wrote again.

"I am much vexed that the loan of £200,000 sterling has not passed as there was reason to hope, and I fear that without some such means we cannot find money or credit sufficient to pay the troops with all that depends upon it.

"Do not forget to hasten the work and furnishing at Kinsington. I would have you tell M^L^ Chamber^L^[ain] to have the room arranged at Whitehall looking over the garden, where I wish to come instead of my old room, and move the furniture there."

The optimistic expectations of Bentinck and Shrewsbury were not immediately fulfilled. Two days later Shrewsbury wrote to the King that in spite of the hopes raised by the gentlemen of the Land Bank that they would furnish a considerable sum, and in spite of several meetings that he and Portland and Godolphin had had with them, all they had subscribed up till then was £40,000, "they appeared to-night so willing to quarrel upon a very slight occasion" that Lord Shrewsbury had no hopes from that quarter, and adds: "We have all told my Lord Portland he must not stir from hence till this matter be over some way or other." Even this small sum was offered upon such terms as made its acceptance impossible.

Lord Portland writes on the same date in greater detail. The merchants who had been appointed to meet him came and promised to call a meeting in the city on the following day and to make every effort. However, the next evening five of them came to say that:

"the majority were so embittered by the ill-treatment they had received from certain people, and that they were so distrustful of that they had received during your Majesty's absence, that they would not be prevailed upon unless your Majesty would give them a charter to make a corporation, in the hope that the next Parliament would form them into a Bank."

Bentinck pointed out to them how prejudicial this delay would be to the King's service and that it would be better for them that they should advance the 200/m.—without its being capitalised and that before paying more they could be informed of his Majesty's views. They were convinced, and promised that they would work on the subscription, but on the next afternoon they all came to say that they had not advanced their subscriptions beyond forty-six thousand because of the Jews, with whom the Treasury had agreed to send by this post, twenty thousand pounds. Bentinck had pointed out to them how unreasonable this was, and offered to give them the same conditions as the Jews ;

" upon which they had nothing to reply which makes one think they have not the power to do what they have promised. The Speaker and his friends are much annoyed about it, and have promised to do their utmost, but I begin to doubt whether they will succeed. . . . The zeal and good disposition of people all over the country for your Majesty is more manifest in these troublesome times than one could have believed, and is such as perhaps has never before been seen anywhere. . . . I will go to Windsor on Sunday to see the Princess."

On August 4 Bentinck wrote again. The merchants had come to say they were powerless to push the thing further, and offered to send to Holland in eight days the sum of £40,000 provided that the Treasury would give them security for it. . . .

" The Lords Justices meet to-morrow morning with the Treasury and have asked me to be there. There are three things which could be tried (to raise the £200,000) :

" (1) To ask for a loan from the City.

" (2) To demand a subscription from all Government servants.

" (3) To take two or three hundred thousand pounds that is in the Exchequer, and which is useless at this moment."

This last course Bentinck points out is very dangerous because it is prejudicial to the credit of the Exchequer, and individuals will never believe their money is safe if it could be taken out at need.

"The first expedient is the most likely to succeed, the second if we see that the City is unable to furnish a sufficient sum. I also think the National Bank will make some effort to assist the Public and restore its credit. . . . I find myself in difficulties about my return, of which they are unwilling that I should even speak, because if I leave here before the money of which your Majesty has need is found, everyone will believe the matter desperate, which worries me greatly, so much the more as I have had the honour to receive only one letter from your Majesty of the 2nd of August since my arrival in this country." [1]

With regard to Sunderland Bentinck says:

"he has arrived, and I do not find that there is any more appearance of jealousy than before [of himself evidently], but certainly the business of the money has occupied us so much that we have hardly had leisure to speak of other things." [2] He adds, "I was yesterday at Windsor to see the Princess by your Majesty's orders. I have also been to Kensington which will be finished in three weeks or a month at latest. I hurried Mr. Montague about the furniture, the staircase is very fine; the little 'Chambre de luxe' is almost finished and I believe your Majesty will be satisfied with both one and the other.

"Lady Mary Fenwick has been to see me. She said that if your Majesty would pardon her husband he would declare to you all he knew, and who those are who betray you in your Council, your Fleet and your army, but that he would not be a witness. I replied that I did not think your Majesty would make any condition, although the only means of saving himself were not to make any; and if

[1] William had written on August 2 to say he had received no news.

[2] Sunderland made no secret of his jealousy, and said of Keppel: "This young man brings and carries a message well; but Portland is so dull an animal that he can neither fetch nor carry."

he wished to deserve mercy I advised him to tell all without reserve, and trust entirely to your Majesty's clemency."

When the negotiations had reached this stage Bentinck received a letter from the Camp at Atterre, August 9.[1] The King expresses himself "very much concerned at the delay in Bentinck's sailing, and hopes he will have a good passage, he is very impatient for news from him."

Apparently the King had not received Bentinck's letter, though that of Shrewsbury had reached and considerably perturbed him :

"He explains clearly that he sees no probability that the affair of the money or credit can be established, and thus the only thing that remains for me to do is to make peace. Perhaps he will tell you the same thing, but he is very reserved. I wished to write at any risk in order that you might be informed of his views. . . . Here are we reduced to thinking of nothing but how to subsist and make an end of this vexatious campaign."

Bentinck replied after some delay, due perhaps to his hoping for some definite news to send :

"Whitehall, August 7 (17), 1696. The day before yesterday I had the honour to receive two letters from your Majesty, one of the 6th the other of the 9th of this month." After some allusion to Scottish affairs he continues :

"Yesterday the Lords Justices were assembled with the Treasury, when they summoned me. They had sent for the Governor and 99 directors of the Bank [of England]. They proposed to them to advance £200,000, on which they made great difficulties, making great complaints that they had received from the Treasury very ill-usage : that the last £200,000 that they had advanced had not been paid according to positive promise ; that the great losses that they had sustained, which they had represented so often to the Treasury last winter, and that your Majesty had promised them to reimburse, had been refused and neglected ; that all these things had made them lose credit, and had made

[1] Evidently N.S., as Bentinck's reply is dated August 7 (17).

it impossible for them to satisfy this demand according to the zeal they had for your Majesty's service. The Lords Justices have spoken them as fair as possible, assuring them that if they would render this service to the Public they would do all in their power to assist them, and raise their credit; that as for giving them a sum in consideration of their loss, they could not do it without having previous orders from your Majesty, but that as for everything else, they would be very glad to consider favourably all the propositions that the Bank could make for their advantage, and that as for the first point they would intercede with your Majesty and would represent the thing favourably in order that you would be willing to consider it. They resolved to prepare the form of a general subscription from all those who hold office and from all those who wish to show their zeal for the service of your Majesty; and that the well-intentioned in the City should be sounded cautiously in order to learn what could be expected from a loan from the City, and that afterwards we should judge whether one could ask it, in order not to be exposed to a refusal. I have to-day employed all my time among those interested in the Bank [Ceux de la Banque] as my Lords Justices and the Treasury have asked me to try to persuade them to do what they are asked. I find very great difficulties there. They ask that by subscription, or bringing plate,[1] one

[1] "By bringing in plate," see Luttrell, iv. 91. July 30, 1696. "The Lords of the Treasury have ordered £5000 in new money to be sent to each of the Mints in the country for the present payment of such plate as shall be brought in to be coyned."

Note 1.—Mints were established at Bristol, York, Exeter, Norwich and Chester in order to facilitate the circulation of the new coinage, but even so it was not till August that the financial strain began to be eased, for much of the new money was hoarded from the expectation that its value would be raised when Parliament met.

Note 2.—Shrewsbury, always pessimistic, thought nothing of the scheme of raising a loan among the servants of the Crown and the State: "A general subscription, it is doubted, will come but to little, and has so much the air of a brief, that it will not be much for the reputation of the Government, which I believe is one thing to be considered in the present conjuncture. A loan from the City is much doubted also. . . . Either or both of these attempted and failing is proclaiming our misery; yet anything must be tried and ventured rather than lie down and die"—a heroic conclusion calculated to soothe the irritation of the sorely tried man to whom it was addressed. August 7 (17). Coxe. Shrewsbury to William III.

should furnish them with some silver; that all members of the Government should accept more or less some share in the Bank in order to raise their credit, and above all that your Majesty should give them some consideration for their great losses; and I believe that if I could promise them this last point, as far as your Majesty judged it reasonable, they could still be persuaded to make an effort, without which I do not know where we shall turn to seek other means. If this succeeds it will be necessary for me to engage myself a second time in this company of merchants since they particularly ask it of me; if this succeeds I believe that those interested in the Bank will try to facilitate the loan in the City if they can."

Bentinck himself, indefatigable and zealous as he was, seems at this point to be losing heart, and writes:

"Your Majesty may be assured that I will do all that is possible for me to do but indeed it is a great self deception to imagine that I can be of any use. The misfortune for me is that I see myself indispensably detained here for some days till we see the success of this affair. I am always G."

Bentinck's next letter was still more discouraging. The Council of Regency, as he had told the King, had applied to the Bank of England. But no smaller sum than £200,000 would meet the King's immediate needs. The Governor, Sir John Houblon, at that time Lord Mayor, and the Directors were well disposed, but the result was still doubtful.

On August 11 (21), writing from Whitehall, Bentinck complains that the business on which he has been sent was so protracted that he hardly knew what was to be hoped from it. "Things are conducted with so little zeal both in the City and on the Exchange," he complains, and:

"It is only too true that they do not seem to be as sensible as they ought of the danger that threatens us in consequence of want of money not only for the

subsistence of the army, but for all the other services which suffer from the same defect."

The letter concludes on a note of despondency :

"Your Majesty can easily judge of my annoyance at seeing myself here without being able to tell when I shall come to the end of the negotiation, and that it is necessary to row against wind and tide. May God grant that we shall arrive in port at the end of it, and then I will not complain of my trouble nor of my long sojourn in this country at this time."

"I am to your Majesty, G."

In reply to Bentinck's suggestion about the Exchequer the King writes still from the Camp of Atterre :

"I am greatly disturbed to see that all the good hopes they have given you of finding £200,000 have vanished. God grant that one of the three measures which are proposed may have the effect which is so necessary. I own that that of taking the money which is in the Exchequer is so hazardous that I do not think anyone would dare to execute it."

The King adds that he sees it is absolutely necessary that Portland should remain in England till the affair of the money is absolutely adjusted. He is leaving the army and returning to Loo.

All the gloomy prognostications of the enemies of the Government and the pessimistic among its supporters were falsified. The Bank of England rose nobly to the occasion. A General Meeting voted unanimously for sending the money. Triumphant with success Bentinck hastened to send the good news to the King. It meant even more than the mere money, it meant the united loyalty and support of Government and people.

"Whytehall, August 15 (25), 1696.

"I am overjoyed to be able at last to tell your Majesty that the business for which I came will soon permit me to return . . . the Directors of the Bank assembled yesterday, and after a long debate and much opposition they resolved

to propose to the General Court to advance to your Majesty £200,000 sterling. And in order to lose no time they have convened if for to-day. My Lord Mayor and his colleagues have done all they possibly could to achieve the thing, and have so well succeeded that the Court agreed unanimously to the proposal of the Directors without opposition from a single man. They afterwards went to find the Lords Justices and have declared to them their resolution that they would send by this post £50,000 and that by the following posts they would remit the other sums in the assurance that your Majesty will not refuse their just demands in consideration of the loss they have suffered."

The following letter from the King was written before this good news could reach him.

"The Camp of Atterre, August 23.

"I have received your letter of 7 (17) of this month and am very much vexed to see more and more that there are so great difficulties in finding money or credit that I do not know what I may hope for in the end. I own that I was very much vexed on your personal account that you should engage yourself again in the old Bank and I much doubt whether it has the wherewithal to provide what is asked of it. But I believe that one way or another the business is terminated at present and that you are on the point of departure."

The King adds that he is returning to Breda in a couple of days.

Bentinck returned to Flanders early the following week.[1] After he had rejoined him the King wrote to Shrewsbury :

"The Earl of Portland returned yesterday and has fully informed me of what passed during his journey to England.

[1] Luttrell, iv. 97, August 15. This day the Bank of England held a general Court and resolved *nemine contradicente* to lend the King £200,000, and for that end call in the remaining 20 per cent. being the whole of their subscription. They are to meet next Friday to consider of the best method of payment for it; besides which some eminent citizens have advanced £42,000 and the Jews £30,000.

He cannot say enough in favour of your civilities and frankness and has acquainted me with your zeal and endeavours for my service, for which I am much obliged to you being greatly concerned that you are not seconded as we could wish, which would produce more activity in our business than we find." [1]

Lord Shrewsbury was so much gratified at this testimonial to his good faith that he hastened to write to Bentinck, from whom he had already had a civil letter acknowledging the attentions he had received from him while in England.

"I perceive that your Lordship has represented the zeal of my intentions and my poor services, with such advantage to his Majesty that I ought not, nor ever shall, forget the obligation. It is with the same goodness that in yours of the 4th (N.S.) you are willing to acknowledge and set some value upon the freedom I used in laying some matters before you here. I can hold my tongue; but if I speak it must be in that style; and knowing your own natural sincerity, and our long undisputed fidelity to his Majesty, I did then, and shall upon all occasions for the future, since you are so kind as to encourage it, proceed with the same frankness, and open my heart in all things relating to his Majesty's service."

Bentinck could not but be gratified at this engagingly artless protestation, and replied with like candour:

"Loo, September 8 (18). Ever since I had the honour to know you I have perceived a coldness and reserve towards me, which I wished not to deserve; but rather than attribute it to you, I have concluded that I myself was the cause of it, being sufficiently just to myself to know part of my own failings, but as we cannot control those, which arise from nature, and which are born with us, I have deemed the evil incurable. . . . But . . . I assure you, Sir, . . . that this cold and reserved disposition, which I frankly avow, shall

[1] Coxe, Aug. 24 (Sept. 2), 1696.

wholly vanish after the candour, which you have had the goodness to promise me." [1]

He laments some delay in the financial supplies from the Bank and adds, "We returned hither yesterday evening from Cleves, without any appearance of bringing back a Queen if it be thence she is to come." London gossip had reported that William's visit to the Duke of Brandenburg at Cleves was for the purpose of making a second marriage with a princess of that House.[2] Prior describes her as: "A tall miss at a boarding school with a scraggy lean neck." The Elector met the King at the riverside, and returned with him in the same coach, followed by the old Duke of Celle in another, with the little Electoral Prince. At the Electoral table the next day "there was a great deal of good meat and ill wine for everybody else, but they filled it in such mighty glasses, and it came about so fast that people grew drunk before they had half dined." The women, says Prior, were "all ill-dressed in old-fashioned stiff-bodied gowns too big for them with their breasts and shoulders naked." [3]

The visit was dictated by policy and not with a view to agreeable entertainment. Portland was fully occupied at Cleves on his master's business. It was after this visit that there occurred an unfortunate and undignified fracas between him and Keppel. Prior relates it with the sly malice characteristic of him:

"Our two favourites have had a quarrel; in coming home, Keppel being heated with wine, and heedless, made his coachman drive before my Lord Portland, who was in one of the Duke of Zell's coaches; upon which Lord Portland said he would beat the coachman, who excusing himself upon his orders, my Lord Portland said, whoever gave those orders was an impertinent puppy, or some such words. The ground of the quarrel began, I believe, at Cleves; my Lord Portland was most of the time with the Elector and the Ministers and Mons. Keppel sat by the King, which was a distinction which I believe fretted the other's heart." [4]

[1] Coxe's *Shrewsbury*.
[2] Luttrell, iv. 101, 113.
[3] Buccleuch MSS., quoted from Bickley's *Life of Prior*.
[4] *Ibid.*

The peace negotiations made slow progress. Auersperg had a long talk on the subject with William at Loo. Unfortunately the former excellent understanding between the King and the Emperor had given way to mutual distrust. The Emperor desired a closer understanding, as a preliminary to a Congress. William replied that if a Congress was delayed any longer he could not answer for either England or Holland. After this interview Bentinck was sent after the Ambassador. He tried to remove the doubts of William's good faith. If only one would put a little more trust and belief in the King, he had no desire to be the sole arbiter of peace conditions as the Emperor seemed to think. To which Auersperg replied there was no ground for attributing such sentiments to the Emperor. Portland cited the views of members of both Houses of Parliament with whom he had discussed the question: That if only the King could hold out a prospect of a Peace Congress anything else would be accommodated and agreed upon.

On October 4 (14) William sailed for England with a favourable wind, but by some inexplicable error on the part of the pilot very nearly landed on the coast of France on the next day. A passing Dutch skipper observed the danger and averted it by timely warning.

On William's return he and Bentinck with him immediately became involved in the difficult and dangerous political situation brought about by Fenwick's trial. He had been arrested in June, on his way to France. A letter he wrote to his wife was intercepted and furnished proofs of his complicity in the Assassination Plot. He sought to save his life by important disclosures, and furnished a document incriminating several men in influential positions, as being in communication with James II., and concerned in Jacobite plots. Among these were Russell, Marlborough, Godolphin and Shrewsbury. This information was forwarded to William at the Hague by the Duke of Devonshire without the knowledge of the accused persons. As a supreme mark of his confidence the King sent the paper to Shrewsbury with the kindest expressions of his regard and trust: "You are, I trust, too fully convinced of the entire confidence which I place in you to imagine that such an accusation has made an impression on me, or that if it had, I should have sent you this paper."

The King added that Fenwick's obvious aim was to have his trial deferred.

Bentinck wrote by the same post to the same effect :

" Although you are above suspicion, if it do not remain secret, everyone having enemies as well as friends, it will be impossible to prevent disagreeable conversation and reflections, as I know by experience." He adds, that to save himself, " Fenwick would accuse all the members of the Government, and I know not why he should not name me, as well as you, since that would be equally deserving of credit." [1]

The unhappy Shrewsbury was overwhelmed by this blow in the dark just when he was so happily established, assured of the confidence of the King and Bentinck. No expressions of their continued trust could calm his distress or allay his anxieties. A serious accident in the hunting-field added a nervous shock, from which he could not rally. Lord Middleton, James's most active and trusted agent, was the husband of Shrewsbury's aunt ; and the connection might easily give rise to suspicions and gossip. Since their near relationship occasioned some intercourse with this Jacobite family, Shrewsbury hastened to tell the King of his last interview with Middleton, but while acknowledging with the deepest expressions of gratitude " the noble and frank manner with which your Majesty has used me upon this occasion," he adds that public opinion " may perhaps make me incapable of serving you."

He remained at his country seat at Eyford in much distress of body and mind, while his official business was carried on by the secretary Vernon and his colleagues. He begged leave to resign ; the slightest motion, even that of a litter, brought on serious hæmorrhage ; his letters express the agitation of his mind and the depression of his spirits. The King wrote [2] in the kindest terms urging his return : " I am impatient to embrace you, and to assure you of the continuance of my esteem." And again on October 20 William says :

" I hope that the letter in which you offer to resign the seals is the effect of chagrin arising from your unfortunate accident ; as I am sure on reflection you must be

[1] Loo, September 10. Coxe's *Shrewsbury*, 146.
[2] Coxe's *Shrewsbury*, 154–7.

convinced that you could not have chosen a more improper time to execute such a design, as well on your account as on mine."

Lord Portland, who maintained a frequent correspondence with the unhappy man, uses a tone of cordiality and sympathy unusual with him, and gives advice with the solicitude of an elder brother :

"I am not surprised that in your present seclusion, oppressed as you are with illness, the vexatious rumours spread by mischievous people should give you a great deal of uneasiness ; but this ought not to affect you so far as to urge you to a step which would be prejudicial to your interest and honour—pardon this expression from a man whom you have so kindly received into your friendship, after which you must allow me the liberty of speaking frankly on a point so important."

After pointing out that people would say Shrewsbury had retired because he feared a Parliamentary inquiry into Fenwick's statement, Bentinck continues :

"Can you doubt that your friends have the will and the power to justify you strongly from an accusation of which you are innocent. . . . Leave all to time and your friends, and think only of recovering from your accident, which of itself will occasion you but too much vexation. God grant that the aid of Sir Thomas Millington [1] may relieve you and accomplish your cure."

Shrewsbury allowed himself to be dissuaded from resigning office.

Sir John Fenwick was encouraged by the escape of one of the two witnesses against him to withhold the information that was to be the price of his life, but such was the exasperation of the Whigs that a bill of Attainder was brought in, passed by a small majority, and Fenwick was condemned

[1] Dr. Millington, a well-known physician whose name often occurs in contemporary journals.

and executed. Portland wrote at once to Shrewsbury: "Whitehall, January 20. As all is now finished, entirely to your advantage, I could not delay congratulating you. Nothing is now wanting but your presence, and I hope your health will permit you to return."

It was curious that during this trial Portland's half-jesting words to Shrewsbury that they might as well try to accuse him were fulfilled. An attempt was made to accuse him, not, of course, of complicity in the plot, but of knowing that Fenwick's accusation of the King's ministers was substantially true. Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Monmouth, apparently from no other motive than that of producing a sensation, conceived the idea of conveying the suggestion to Fenwick that he should ask if this were not the case, and request that the King should make public the cause which had led to Marlborough's disgrace. Fenwick rejected the advice as dangerous and of doubtful advantage to himself. Monmouth, on information from Lady Mary Fenwick, was disgraced and sent to the Tower.[1]

The autumn session of 1696 was unusually propitious. Parliament resolved to support the King against all foreign and domestic enemies, as well as in the vigorous prosecution of the war. Further they decided that the standard of money should not be altered, and readily granted the necessary funds for the army and navy. Their action had the happiest results at home and abroad. At home, hoarded money came into circulation, and the prosperity of the country began to revive; abroad an altered tone was manifested by France towards the peace negotiations. At the end of the autumn campaign of 1696 the defection of Savoy, the misunderstandings of the Allies, the readiness of Spain and the Emperor to agree to the neutrality of Italy, the financial straits to which England was reduced, had all combined to raise the hopes of Louis XIV.; so that Callières, becoming arrogant in his attitude, receded from the pledge to recognise William as King of England. "The King declared that the negotiations on the part of France were a farce and encouraged the Jacobites."[2] Now the tone of France was changed. Callières, acting on fresh instructions from his master, declared to Dykvelt at the Hague his readiness to

[1] For details of this curious story, see Coxe's Shrewsbury. Correspondence with the Whig Leaders, p. 450.

[2] William to Heinsius, November 13 (23).

recognise William as King unconditionally.[1] The good news was at once communicated to the House of Commons.

In the spring of 1697 France offered reasonable terms, consenting to agree to the claims of the Allies and to restore such conquests as were demanded as a basis of negotiation. Besides recognising the Prince of Orange as King of England, Louis XIV. proposed to give back Lorraine to its Duke, Luxemburg to Spain, Strasburg to the Emperor, but now that the way appeared clear Spain began to make impossible demands, while the Emperor would gladly have deferred peace till the death of the King of Spain should afford him the support of the Coalition to make good his claim on that Kingdom.

Earlier in the year Bentinck had tried to convince Auersperg of the disadvantages to the cause of Peace that delay would produce.[2] Auersperg would not admit that Leopold was in any way responsible for it. "Do me the favour," he said, "to say in what respects the Emperor delays peace; in what points he does not bring to it every conceivable willingness." "I have on my side to ask," continued the Ambassador, "whether through an over-hasty zeal for peace, opportunities are not offered to France? Notwithstanding all our protestations here and in the Hague that we desire the city of Strasburg, Dyckvelt has allowed Callières every time to add to Strasburg the words: 'or an equivalent.' That is to our disadvantage." "No indeed," replied Bentinck, "for it remains open to the Emperor to accept one or the other." "Allow me," interrupted Auersperg, "to be of the other opinion, while Holland permits this discourse, Callières must continue in the opinion that this could not happen, unless Holland were

[1] Heinsius, December 1, 490. William in reply says, December 8 (18): "I have learned with pleasure that Calières has agreed to the preliminaries with regard to me, which I also judge to be as advantageous as were proposed in the first instance." He adds that he does not know what this sudden change betokens—doubtless some ill-intention. See also Prior to Lexington, November 17 (27), 1696.

[2] Auersperg's *Bericht*, February 9 (19), 1697. Klopp, vii. 364.

Note.—Commenting to Heinsius, December 18 (28), p. 512, on the difficulties the Imperial Ambassadors threw in the way of peace negotiations, William says they must judge it more advantageous for them to have the Spanish Succession Question terminated during the continuation of war than in Peace, "that is probably true—but that is not our view."

sure of an inclination for an equivalent on the part of the Emperor." He added that if such things were not checked misunderstandings must increase between the heads of the Alliance. Bentinck replied that " one must strive to remain united about the conclusion of Peace," to which Auersperg responded, " I hold this union indispensably necessary to the salvation of us all." Finally he asked, if France were permitted to prescribe terms to armed Allies, what was to be hoped for when the Alliance merely existed on parchment ? Were the English, he demanded, prepared to maintain so large an army in time of peace ? To this, he concluded in his dispatch, Lord Portland did not know how to reply—probably had had no instructions. His position was a very difficult one, for the interests of the Allies actually were diverse, and if Kaunitz from the Hague, and Auersperg from London raised fears at Vienna of a separate peace between England, Holland and France, Louis XIV. had taken care to disseminate rumours of a separate peace between the Emperor and himself. When Auersperg had an audience of the King, William told him frankly that it was impossible for England and Holland to carry on the war alone. He knew that Leopold would do his best to act on the defensive on the Rhine, but a new campaign would inevitably leave them in a worse position. For his part, he would not permit his hand to be forced. He would put himself and the Republic in safety that these two nations might once again draw breath.[1]

For seven years William had kept together the unwieldy Coalition, principally with English money, had risked his life in the field, and at the hands of assassins, had sacrificed his health and all the pleasures of life to prosecuting the war. Now that an opportunity of peace on reasonable terms had arisen he was determined to avail himself of it and that soon.

On April 26 the King sailed for the Continent from Margate at one o'clock, arriving the next morning at the Orange Polder. Two days later, the Congress, which had been delayed till his arrival, opened at Ryswick. The village of Ryswick lies midway between Delft and the Hague. Here the Ambassadors of the French and the Allies were assembled. The meetings took place at the Schloss Nieuwburg, a country seat of the House of Orange. The mediator,

[1] Auersperg, March 9 (19). Klopp, vii. 365.

Lilienroth, the Allies, and the French, each had separate entrances to which they studiously kept, arriving from their headquarters on the east and west over different bridges across the canal that surrounded the castle. Meanwhile the campaign in the Netherlands had opened, and called for the King's presence there. He had been suffering from a persistent weakness and loss of appetite that greatly alarmed those to whom his life meant the safety of Europe. The French plan of campaign was that of uniting the two armies under Villeroy and Boufflers and by taking Brussels and other towns, to command the canal—which was the principal means of communication between Holland and Brabant. The little town of Ath was taken, and the French advanced towards Brussels. Then William, invalided as he was, made one of his brilliant countermoves. On July 26 the allied camp at Anderleg was broken up, and at midnight the King rode by torchlight at the head of four regiments of Dragoons. When the morning of June 27 dawned the Allies were in a strong position and the French did not attempt an attack.

The ceremonies, the differences, the adjustments of etiquette between the peace plenipotentiaries again appeared interminable. William was in no mood for delays. The war had been waged by two individuals, himself and Louis XIV. This was an affair to be settled between the principals. He therefore arranged that private meetings should take place between Lord Portland, as his own representative, and his former antagonist, Marshal Boufflers, as representative of the King of France.

While Bentinck had been engaged in the foregoing events, a no less important chapter of his private life had been transacted, though it seems that it was then known only to himself, the King, and William's trusted friend, the Prince de Vaudemont.

It is difficult to tell quite when or how the estrangement between William and his friend began. It is quite evident to any student of contemporary history at first hand that it was not mere jealousy of Keppel that actuated Portland, obvious and inevitable though the existence of such a feeling would have been. The supposition would be unfair to a man of Bentinck's intrinsic dignity of character. Moreover, whatever Court gossip said, he had had even this very year proofs of his master's preference for himself. Keppel, it was true,

had been created Earl of Albemarle in January, not without opposition,[1] but in February Bentinck had been made a Knight of the Garter, in March he was given the Lodge and place of Ranger in Windsor Park, worth £1500 a year; in April he was given the forfeited Clancarty estates in Ireland. Nevertheless towards the end of May Bentinck announced to William his intention of quitting his service.

How far was he justified in so doing? That his action should have been misunderstood by those about him was inevitable, indeed it is impossible to believe that Bentinck's views were not to some extent coloured, and his action influenced by his honest disapproval and natural dislike of an upstart rival, though a rupture could only leave the field free for the exercise of an influence he thought deleterious to his master's reputation, especially abroad. But that master had heaped upon him great possessions, he had repaid a devoted fidelity and lifelong service with deep affection and absolute confidence; Bentinck's power had only been second to the King's. Above all, they had been boys together, intimate friends and companions in the days when the star of the House of Orange had sunk low in the horizon. William had raised him from the obscurity of a country gentleman to a position second in importance to no subject in Europe. It was a position difficult perhaps to maintain for a proud and honest man, unskilled in and despising the arts of a Court. The tone of Bentinck's letters to his master is always studiously respectful, but that he was lacking at times in public homage to the King appears in William's petulant outburst at table to Mary, that Huygens had noted long before. How eagerly his enemies lapped up and retailed any such signs of the Royal displeasure! Bentinck was no favourite. He never stooped to conciliate men whose corruption he despised; but the worst accusation they could bring against him was that of taking bribes, an accusation triumphantly refuted. His integrity, industry and capacity were beyond dispute. Prior, it is true, called his ability in question, but Prior, with all his wit and superficial cleverness, was a shallow, self-sufficient observer; and was moreover the friend of Keppel, and his testimony is worthless in face of the facts. As for the two men, if Bentinck's qualities have been

[1] Luttrell, iv. 176. January 28. "The Earl of Bath has uttered a caveat against the patent to create Monsieur Keppel Earl of Albemarle."

abundantly revealed by his own hand in his letters, as well as by those received from his master, an equally important testimony, the portrait of Keppel survives not only in scattered contemporary references, but by at least two considered character sketches. His rise to favour and influence had been continuous from the time when as a boy he had first attracted William's attention by his pluck and cheerful self-control in an accident in the hunting-field. From that time he was assiduous in cultivating all the arts of a Court. His gaiety pleased the King, it amused him to have Keppel about him. He was employed in copying letters; he sought to please not only the King but the courtiers. The Court was quick to note his rising favour with William, and Bentinck's surly displeasure at it. Those who had smarted from Bentinck's cold and self-contained dignity, and envied him his position of confidant, were zealous in paying court to Keppel; notably Mrs. Betty Villiers and Sunderland, who, in the backstairs methods characteristic of such intriguers, sought to supplant Portland by Keppel's means. Gradually Keppel came to have more influence, and more favours to bestow. "He was so much given up to his own pleasures, that he could hardly submit to the attendance and drudgery necessary to maintain his post," says Burnet, a lenient judge of this cheerful young man, who had all the arts of a Court. But it was Bentinck to whom was entrusted every important and delicate mission, and who still had the King's confidence.

Bentinck had no Court party. Yet when he chose, he knew how to win men's confidence and affection, as witness his obvious kindness for the loyal and sweet-natured Sidney and for the soft, well-meaning Shrewsbury. Jealousy apart, and this factor must not be overlooked, Bentinck had for Keppel the feeling that a great gentleman has for a man whose tone and conduct fall below the accepted standards of honest men. People gossiped about the pretty waiting-maid at Chelsea who was Keppel's mistress. "There goes another of those Dutch rakehells," said an English officer, watching Keppel and his younger brother leave the Court, and this casual comment is typical of the way in which Keppel was popularly regarded. An anonymous writer has left a description of Keppel almost in the manner of a St. Simon. M. "de B." had no love for Bentinck though he recognised his sterling qualities; but he had no toleration for the

spurious arts of ingratiation of the bumptious and pampered supplanter of that faithful watchdog in the first favour of their common master :

" Favour raised him soon and rapidly to all honours. In six years' time he became . . . the idol of the Court. All powerful with his master, without having the modesty of his predecessor, he disposed of everything with *une hauteur indépendente*. All favours passed through his hand. More cherished than a son can be by his father, he governed with an ease which astonished everybody. Never had my Lord Portland approached his credit or his pride. He had a readier and more supple wit than the other, but without either knowledge or any education. His vanity rendered him odious among modest men, and those whose only asset was their own merit. To deserve his support it was necessary to cultivate the airs of a dandy, to make a show and spend money. . . . He was a tolerably good-looking man, well made on a small scale, hiding under the curls of a vast blond perruque a wine stain that he had on his cheek." [1]

Such was Albemarle as he appeared to some of his contemporaries. Bentinck's detestation of him was based on other grounds. The shadow of his unsavoury reputation fell on the King, and it was the knowledge or conviction of this which determined Bentinck in his obstinate attempt to force on William the dismissal of Keppel. The King refused. Could he have done otherwise ?

He was the last man in the world to submit to dictation ; he was ill and broken in health and spirits, his temper, always cold and taciturn, had become more difficult and irascible. There are abundant signs that he had never quite recovered the nervous shock of his wife's death ; his grip on his allies and on affairs had slackened. The tremendous and continuous strain of business, foreign and domestic, that he bore on his own shoulders, and dealt with almost singlehanded, was beyond human endurance. What happened, what irrevocable words were said we shall never

[1] Huygens comments on the immense wig that almost hid his face, when resentfully noticing that Keppel occupied Bentinck's place in the Royal coach.

know. Such words once spoken, the old relationship of confident affection could never quite be resumed. Bentinck seems to have sent the King a message, by whom does not appear, in response to which William sat down and wrote him the following letter. It was headed, "At Kensington on Wednesday at 3 o'clock, March 1697."

"I do not know how I have been able to keep from coming to find you in your appartments after the cruel resolution which they tell me you have taken of leaving my service. It is no more at present a question of reasoning with you on a matter on which you are so greatly in the wrong, it only remains to me to pray you by all the ties which are dearest to you to change this pernicious resolution, and I am sure that if there remains with you the least friendship for me you will not refuse this prayer however hard it may seem to you. I only ask one more year's trial, and that for the last time you will allow yourself to be governed by me during this period. I am sure you will not repent it. Then you can execute what you have resolved upon at present without opposition from me. Now it will be no less prejudicial to your reputation than to your family, and if you will grant the prayer which I make to you with inexpressible earnestness, I shall feel more obligation to you for it, if possible, than for all the good and faithful services which you have rendered me during the 33 years which you have been at my side. Now although we are both unhappy enough, which you are unwilling to believe, I protest before the great God who searches all hearts that I love you as much as I have done all my life. G. W.R.

"If your heart is so hard as to refuse my prayers, do not answer until to-morrow morning, by my Lord Sunderland, who is to come to me then. It would be too overwhelming to have so hard a refusal under your hand."

His letter written, the King folded the large octavo sheet small and put it into an envelope, a little folded and sealed envelope, sealed for greater safety to hold sacred from prying eyes these words so indubitably sincere, so poignantly touching and yet so dignified. Was Bentinck's

heart indeed so hard as to be unmoved by them? We can only guess. At least he treasured the letter in its little envelope, and endorsed it "ayant quitté la cour." It was Sunderland, then, who was the go-between. That arch deceiver, working indefatigably and subtly at his intrigues, worming himself into men's confidence only to betray it, what was his share in the quarrel? Barren speculations with the veil of two hundred years between us and the actors in this tragic drama. At any rate Bentinck took no decisive step at that time. He went abroad in the spring when William paid a visit to Loo, before going to Flanders. At the end of May the King was encamped at Iseringhen, and Portland suddenly left the camp and went to Brussels ill.[1] Before leaving he must have again expressed his wish to retire from the King's service, for William wrote to him from the Camp on May 29 at nine o'clock in the morning:

"You saw what a state I was in yesterday before your departure. I feel no less pain at present in the uncertainty in which I am as to the course which you may resolve to take. The Prince de Vaudemont has not been able to tell me anything. Is it possible, after all the friendship that I have shown you (and in the bottom of your heart you must be persuaded how much I love you), you are in doubt about doing a thing for which all the world will blame you, and which so ill accords with the feelings which you say you still have for me? I should be very anxious about your health, if I did not believe you were more chagrined than ill. May God inspire you not to take a desperate resolution of which you will repent all the rest of your days."

"More chagrined than ill."—The King avoids any mention of the cause of that chagrin, though he must have known it, and made allowances for it. To this letter Bentinck replied and replied explicitly. May 30, 1697. Brussels.

"It is your honour, Sir, which I have at heart, and the kindness which your Majesty has for a young man, and the behaviour, which it seems you authorise, those liberties,

[1] Luttrell, iv. p. 230, May 1697.

those insolent airs make people say things which I am ashamed to hear and which I believe as far fetched as any man in the world. I believed it was the malicious in England who fabricated these outrageous things, but I was thunderstruck when I saw that the Hague and the Army supplied the same talk. . . . It is necessary that your Majesty should take action and protect that reputation which has always been so dear to him."

Bentinck adds that the King's own wisdom and prudence will indicate to him what is the best course to take, and begs that William will not blame him for a liberty that he has exacted from him.[1] By his withdrawal, he will mark his distress at the continuance of what is destroying his master's reputation, and overwhelming himself.

The King had not received this letter when he wrote on June 1 from the Camp to express his joy at the news of Bentinck's recovery but—he has said nothing about his return—" I love you as tenderly as I have done all my life, although you will not be persuaded of it. It is my misfortune and yours." These lines were written hurriedly as William was about to mount his horse to go to " Genappe," where his quarters would be. After it had been dispatched Bentinck's letter was brought to him. The King's first feeling on reading it was one of bewilderment. " It has so surprised me that I do not know where I am," he wrote. Indignation, wounded pride, astonishment combined urged him to reply immediately. He writes, " Sur la Marche. If I did not love you as much as I do, and were not so strongly persuaded of your good intentions, I should take it but very ill." But while for his part the King " will do all he can to avoid such horrible calumnies," he points out with reason that Bentinck's retirement " can only do me grave injury, and as for yourself, all the world will blame your conduct extremely." Let him only return, " and I will love you all my life as much as I have always done."

But no expression of tenderness for himself could reassure Bentinck or restore his confidence. Probably nothing short of Keppel's dismissal would have satisfied

[1] The letters are evidently incomplete, and it looks as if the King had demanded an explanation of Bentinck's conduct.

him. This the King was too proud, too just—too indulgent perhaps—to do. That he did not do so probably came as a disappointment to Bentinck, who replied on June 2 from Brussels. He began by reminding the King of the letter he had received from him at Kensington [1] asking him to wait a year. The reasons he then had for retiring were now strengthened. Why should the reasons for his retirement be known now more than at any other time—" since it was not recently, but some time since that this accursed talk had begun " ?

Meanwhile William wisely resolved to refer the whole matter to the Prince de Vaudemont, a brave soldier, a gallant gentleman, and William's trusted friend. He wrote on June 3 from the Camp of Promelle to Bentinck at Brussels, telling him he had resolved to communicate his letter to the Prince de Vaudemont,

" that at least one man of spirit and good sense may reason with you, and make you see your error . . . I assure you that it is not one of the least of my regrets that after being with me for 33 years you have done nothing worthy of reproach till at your present age passion carries you away and does not permit your good sense to act." [2]

This interview had the happiest results, for on June 5 the King writes :

" I cannot sufficiently express the joy which I feel at what the Prince de Vaudemont has told me that at last you have resolved to return to me. I hope that your health will allow it very soon, and that you will never regret it, to which I shall endeavour to contribute . . . be assured that it is impossible to love you more than I do."

Bentinck replied immediately :

" Your Majesty may well believe that I only took the resolution I have taken after a great combat in my mind against myself, and that I have only relinquished it because of the strong assurances that your Majesty gives me of

[1] In March, the first of this series.
[2] This and the following letter have only been seen by us in translation.

his kindness for myself and of the remedy that he will apply to the matter in question."

He adds that he will join his master as soon as his health permits it.

So ended this unhappy incident, at least for that time.

Meanwhile the negotiations at Ryswick appeared to be dragging on interminably. William wanted the whole affair settled without delay. He had seen too many Congresses to have much opinion of them. Experience had taught him that in the last resort they were generally a one-man affair. These matters were best settled on the field of battle, as was the custom among the Turks, he told Kaunitz and Lilienroth.[1] He determined, therefore, to arrange his own terms with France and to begin peace negotiations directly on behalf of England and Holland. To this end Portland, as Lieutenant-General of the King's Forces, was commissioned to communicate with Marshal Boufflers.

Boufflers was selected in preference to Villeroy as standing high in his master's favour; as being a man of integrity and simplicity, without the vanity and self-importance of Villeroy. Boufflers could be trusted as a precise and honest intermediary, who would not add anything of his own to the communications of either side. On July 1 Boufflers communicated to Louis XIV. that a certain gentleman called de Giey, having been given a safe conduct to Brussels to visit his brother, Equerry to the Prince de Vaudemont, had while there seen Lord Portland, "who had desired him," writes Boufflers, "to give me many compliments from him, and to tell me that he should be delighted to have half an hour's conversation with me, for which purpose he would willingly come two-thirds of the way." The request was at once sanctioned by Louis XIV., who charged Boufflers to "repair to the rendezvous with all the dignity becoming to a marshal of France," and taking all necessary precautions for his safety. The King added, "it is of the highest importance that it should appear that it is my Lord Portland who has asked of you this short conversation."

Boufflers was incredulous and suspicious. He appointed as a meeting-place the village of Brucom, about ten miles

[1] Kaunitz, Imperial Peace Ambassador at the Hague; Lilienroth, Swedish Ambassador acting as mediator for Sweden.

south-west of Brussels, on July 8, at two o'clock, having had the surroundings carefully examined on all sides beforehand by one of his officers for fear of some treachery. He also took the further precaution of posting troops at Halle, a quarter of a league away, with orders to keep in touch with the Guards he took with him to the village.[1]

Lord Portland arrived punctually at the appointed time with six or seven of his gentlemen. Boufflers was at once apprised of his arrival, and went to the rendezvous, Lord Portland coming forward to meet him "with much cordiality and eagerness." After reciprocal compliments, they dismounted in an orchard, and everyone having retired out of hearing, Lord Portland came straight to the point. He explained that the Prince of Orange could show Boufflers no greater mark of his good opinion than by commanding himself to speak with him about the difficulties which delayed the conclusion of peace, believing that this would be a shorter way to remove them, than the conferences at Ryswick.

Boufflers feigned to have received no orders from his master, but would have the honour of communicating to him the substance of their conversation. Portland, "with much politeness and tact," intimated that he did not believe this, and came at once to the point. In the first place he explained that William was sincerely anxious for peace, although the emissaries of Louis XIV. sought to make it believed that he alone opposed it, and secretly caused the Emperor and the Spaniards to raise difficulties. He considered the preliminaries of Louis XIV. reasonable, and the demands raised by Spain and the Emperor unreasonable; therefore, if the satisfaction, which he had a right to demand on the points concerning himself personally were granted, and if the same securities were given him, which were desired by the French for a good solid, sincere and durable peace, he would undertake to make the Emperor and Spain consent to the conditions offered by Louis XIV. in the preliminaries, or in the event of their continued refusal, he would make a separate peace for Holland and England.

There followed in circumstantial detail the points which affected William personally:

[1] The accounts of this and the following interviews are taken principally from Grimblot, *Letters of William III. and Louis XIV.*

Firstly, in the peace to be concluded, in which Louis had consented by his plenipotentiaries at Ryswick to recognise William as King of England, he should also engage not to favour James II. against him directly or indirectly, specifying him by name in the treaty; or, if the King of France should feel too much reluctance to agree to this, other terms may be found giving an equivalent security, to which William will consent, but it was indispensable that James II. should reside out of France.

Secondly, with regard to a condition that Louis was attempting to impose on William, to grant a general amnesty to all Jacobites and the restoration of their estates, this was a matter for the English Parliament, and, moreover, it was inconsistent with his honour and glory to make it a stipulation of a treaty of peace; but when peace was made, and he was acknowledged King, individual cases should be considered on their merits.

The third point referred to the Principality of Orange, that ancient grievance between William and Louis XIV. Boufflers now asked that the subjects of his master should be prohibited from settling in that town,[1] as he foresaw that Protestants in the neighbouring provinces would hasten thither. Portland objected that any such concession would be inconsistent with the sovereignty of William, but agreed that he would give a secret promise that the subjects of Louis XIV. should not settle in Holland without his permission. Finally Lord Portland requested an answer to these points, on which the King of England would either speedily conclude peace, or break off the conferences.

As they were about to separate Portland observed, with apparent carelessness, that "when peace was once concluded, and the agitation of people's minds calmed, the King of France would not be sorry to have an ally like the Prince of Orange."

Boufflers wrote to Louis, expressing his belief that Portland was acting in good faith "with the intention of concluding peace as soon as possible," than which there could be no higher testimony to Bentinck's excellence as an Ambassador. Louis XIV. replied to the communication in his usual tone of imposing grandiloquence. He paid William, however, one delicate compliment: "I could not

[1] And so beyond French jurisdiction.

see him at the head of so powerful a league, as that which has been formed against me, without having that esteem for him which the deference that the principal powers of Europe have for his opinions seems to demand." His reply was in the main accommodating, but on one point he was firm; he could not entertain the suggestion that James should be banished when he had "found no asylum elsewhere." It was inconsistent with his honour.

He withdrew his request for a general amnesty for Jacobites, if William on his side would consent that Louis's subjects should be prohibited from settling in Orange.

The second meeting took place at the same time and place on July 15. On the first point William agreed that James should not be named in the treaty, but after its conclusion he suggested that James might be asked to reside elsewhere. On this point Louis would consent to no undertaking, but he agreed to the insertion of a clause, in which he engaged in general terms not to assist the enemies of William directly or indirectly.

On July 18 William wrote to Heinsius asking his advice as to how the article by which France engaged not to assist King James without naming him should be drawn up, "for it appears that on this the whole affair of the pacification chiefly depends." [1] He also sent directions for informing the assembled Ambassadors of the interviews that were taking place. The assembled Ambassadors were already well aware of it. Louis XIV. had taken care not to lose so good an opportunity of dividing their counsels. Kaunitz inquired of Heinsius whether these meetings of which everyone was talking concerned the accommodation of the differences over King James; and when Heinsius tried to hedge he interrupted: "I beg that you will not say anything to me about the exchange of prisoners, that is talk for children; on such an errand the King of England would not send his most trusted emissary." [2]

On July 20 the third meeting took place between Portland and Boufflers. It would be tedious to go into them all in detail. On this occasion Portland, according to Boufflers,[3] outdid even Louis XIV.'s own creatures in the extravagant

[1] Heinsius, 575.
[2] "Ersten Vertrauten." Klopp, vii. 394. Kaunitz dispatch.
[3] Grimblot, p. 43. Boufflers to Louis XIV., July 21, 1697.

compliments paid him on behalf of William. The austere Dutchman is represented as considering his French protagonist "not only the greatest sovereign in the world, but personally as the greatest man on account of your rare and exalted qualities." He may possibly have deemed that this was the most effective means of oiling the wheels of French diplomacy—or Boufflers himself may have thought so. Boufflers was bent on whittling down the terms proposed by Portland. As William foresaw, everything turned on the wording of the clause by which Louis XIV. bound himself not to support James II. without wounding the exile's feelings by mentioning him by name. Boufflers demurred at the word "person or persons" [1] and was afraid to commit himself to anything so definite. He had to refer this to Versailles. The question of James II.'s leaving St. Germain had been tacitly allowed to drop.

Meanwhile the French had advanced peace proposals at the Congress which William considered reasonable. They also fixed a date—August 31—for the termination of the negotiations, which William also thought reasonable.

On July 22 Auersperg sought out Bentinck after the third meeting with Boufflers, to find out what was on foot.

It is amusing to compare the reports of the French and Imperial Ambassadors; they are irreconcilable. Bentinck said that he had the King's orders for communicating everything to Auersperg. He represents Boufflers as having taken the first step towards a meeting by letting it be known that he wished it in order to thank Portland for the civility he showed him after the fall of Namur; and that William, when he heard of it, thought such an opportunity might be utilised. In the conversations which consequently took place, Portland said he assured Boufflers of William's genuine wish for peace, but since he saw the French Ambassador at Delft so full of chicanery [2] he could only assume that France did not desire it, and it was Boufflers who surmised that the great enmity of William and Louis XIV. in the past would give place to a far greater

[1] The draft of the article to be inserted in the Treaty of Peace required Louis XIV. to promise "that he will not assist directly or indirectly with arms . . . any person or persons of whatever rank or condition they may be, who should be disposed to make any attempt against the King of Great Britain."—Grimblot.

[2] Klopp, 405, 680, "Stark chicaniren."

friendship. Auersperg here interrupted him : " Many other things were talked about. The French Ambassador, Harlay, has asserted openly that Boufflers made use of the phrase, 'que le roi de France accordera l'honneur de ses bonnes grâces au Prince d'Orange, quand il s'en rendra digne.' " [1] On which Portland laughed and replied, " I talked as I have told you. I beg you to tell me frankly anything you hear on the subject. The safety of Europe depends on a good understanding between the Emperor and the King." [2] " Did not the discussion turn principally upon King James II. and Lorraine ? " asked Auersperg, trying to bring him back to the point. " Upon the first, to be sure," replied Portland, and added that this point was now satisfactorily adjusted, without, however, entering into details.

He concluded the conversation with these words :

" I especially beg you to bear in mind that if God will grant us peace, necessity requires us not merely to renew the Alliance, but respectively to come to an understanding what to do, and in what manner to help one another in the event of France's breaking the peace." [3]

On their fourth meeting on July 26 Boufflers advanced beyond Halle to meet Bentinck, and their suites mingled and conversed amicably together as though peace were now an assured thing. The two Ambassadors eventually came to terms, Louis XIV. having written to Boufflers on July 24 : " It is my pleasure in the last resort that you should agree to the terms of M. Bentinck." During these conversations Boufflers and Louis XIV. in his letters always spoke of William as " the Prince of Orange " to save James's feelings till the last moment. Boufflers requested that William, without saying how matters stood between himself and Louis, would now use his influence with the Allies " to hasten and facilitate all things " for the conclusion of peace. Bentinck seems now to have indulged in some frankness,

[1] Cp. Letter from Louis XIV. to Boufflers, p. 20, Grimblot.

[2] Auersperg's Report, July 22 *seq.* " In Einigkeit und Vertrauen leben."

[3] Auersperg's Report. July 22 (Klopp), vii. In a secret Article of Alliance, 1689, William and Leopold had engaged to support one another in the Spanish Succession Question.

even according to the highly polished accounts of Boufflers. He replied that it was not so easy, for although William had seen the peace proposals delivered to the Conference, and considered them reasonable without any offensive expressions which "had not always been the case," he was obliged to use great circumspection with the Allies, especially the Emperor, who raised most difficulties, to which Louis's own plenipotentiaries had greatly added by telling the other ministers that William had said "he would make the Allies do just what he pleased."

On July 29 William wrote to Heinsius that he had told Auersperg that "We could no longer continue the war, that peace must be accepted on the conditions offered, within the term proscribed."

Portland wrote the same day to Shrewsbury in confidence telling him of the article agreed upon between himself and Boufflers. Shrewsbury objected very reasonably to William's not being given his full title, in which he said the Lord Chancellor and Lord Chamberlain agreed with him. He also drew attention to the omission of any provision removing James from the neighbourhood of Paris.[1] Bentinck replied reassuringly that the King would be given his full title in the treaty itself, and after cordial expressions of his good will and respect for Shrewsbury's opinion begged him in conclusion "to consider the difficulty I had in negotiating anything, when there is such risk in speaking positively and yet when no weakness should be shown."[2]

On August 3 William returned to Loo to be near Ryswick, where the negotiations were still dragging on. His anxiety in these anxious days is expressed in three letters to Bentinck at the Hague. He writes from Dieren[3] on August 28: "God grant that the peace may be signed on Saturday, otherwise I foresee terrible embarrassments. . . . I am in great inquietude, seeing in what a crisis all the affairs of

[1] The draft given to Portland by Boufflers on the date, July 27, ran as follows: "The King will engage by the treaty not to assist directly or indirectly the enemies of the Prince of Orange, without any exception; binding himself further not to favour in any manner whatsoever, the Cabals, secret intrigues, fractions and rebellions which may occur in England, or those who shall excite or foment them without any exception of person."

[2] Coxe's *Shrewsbury*.

[3] Prior to Lexington, August 6. "His Lordship came hither from Breda on Sunday and left us yesterday afternoon in order to his meeting the King at Dieren to-morrow night."

Europe are." On the following day the King writes expressing the pleasure with which he learned on returning from the chase that Bentinck was arrived at the Hague. This letter is principally concerned with the question whether the Imperial Ambassadors would conclude peace before the expiration of the allotted term. The fateful day, August 21 (31), came and passed and the treaty was unsigned. All the King's insistence, all his carefully laid plans, all Bentinck's diplomacy were defeated. He seems to have written his master a reassuring letter to the effect that there were still hopes of a settlement, for the King writes from Loo, September 1 :

"I have this afternoon received your letter written after midnight. I own that I am troubled that the term has passed without any conclusion. . . . I am extremely impatient to know what will take place this afternoon at the Conference at Ryswick, for I think this must decide everything. . . . I quite understand that you cannot leave the Hague before something is determined, but I cannot suppose this will drag on more than a day or two, or certainly the French will play us some dishonest trick, about which I am not a little anxious."

William's predictions were fulfilled. Louis XIV. raised his terms and insisted on keeping Strasburg. September 20 was the allotted date by which these terms had to be accepted. Heinsius and Portland hastened to acquaint the King with the disastrous news. He replied to Portland immediately :

"I own that I have never in my life been more embarrassed what part to take. There was nothing easier than to continue the war, but how to make peace after the Declaration just made by the French Ambassador, I do not know."

In his letter Portland had suggested some course of action which William is disposed to follow, but he adds in that case we must be prepared to continue the war, "and God knows in what a state we are for continuing it." This whole letter is unlike William's usual tone of crisp

decision. He wavers, he feels himself hampered in any action he takes, not by the English Parliament, but by the feeling of the Estates and still more by "les messieurs d'Amsterdam." He commands Bentinck to come to Loo that they may discuss so important a matter together, and finally gives permission that Bentinck "should write to Marshal Boufflers since the Pensionary thinks it necessary, but I know in advance what answer you will have."

This was done. Bentinck wrote to Boufflers to say he would be at Brussels on the 9th and asking for an appointment.[1] In a conversation which lasted four and a half hours Portland recapitulated the attempts of his master to secure peace, and declared that the Allies could only conclude from the conduct of the French plenipotentiaries that there was a want of good faith particularly in respect of Strasburg and an intention to prolong the war on the part of France. He reiterated that it was not to be hoped that William would sign peace unless the Emperor and the other Allies were permitted a reasonable time to accede to it, and unless a reasonable equivalent was offered for Strasburg. He also complained of the lack of respect of the French plenipotentiaries for those of the King of England, always speaking, says Boufflers in his report, "with much reserve and circumspection but with much politeness and civility." Nothing came of this interview. The King wrote from Loo on September 14 acknowledging the report he had received from Brussels of Bentinck's interview with Boufflers. "I am deeply concerned that you had no other fruit of it." If he were free to follow his own wishes he would "stand firm," but his hand has been forced by Amsterdam.[2]

"I fear that we must make peace as we can if France wishes it, unless we could make these Amsterdam people see clearly that she does not wish it, and that she continues to deceive us . . . as for England, although they desire peace too ardently, I am not much disturbed about it, but you know the Parliament."

[1] Prior writes from the Hague, September 1697. "My Lord Portland is here and labours with indefatigable diligence and great prudence in this affair."

[2] Heinsius to William, September 11 and 14.

Bentinck was expected to arrive at the Hague the same day, and was to join the King at Loo immediately.[1]

Wearied by the intractability of his Allies, William eventually accepted the modified peace terms. On September 10 (20) the treaty was signed between France, Holland, England and Spain. The Emperor was given till November 1 to accede to its terms. His plenipotentiaries signed it on the 2nd of that month. William's anxieties were, however, by no means at an end. On September 22 he wrote to Heinsius: "May the good God bless the peace that has been concluded and long continue us in His grace. I own that the manner of it troubles me not a little for the future." At the same time Portland wrote to Shrewsbury,[2] evidently by order, to congratulate him on the conclusion of peace, but regretting the "immoderate desire" that had been shown for it, and adding, "However it will ease our affairs in England . . . provided we place ourselves in a condition to insure and preserve it." These guarded words imply the necessity for making preparations for another war. Meanwhile the armies in Flanders had to be paid and William wrote to Bentinck on October 27 from Loo: "I think it absolutely necessary to negotiate for more money of which you will see the possibility when you are in England."

Portland must have started within the next day or two. His proposed French Embassy was already matter of common talk. Prior writes, "My Lord Portland is here waiting for a wind to go to England on his way to France."

Before leaving Holland he had an important conversation with the Imperial Ambassador, on the action that William thought their common interests required. The King, he told Auersperg,

"holds it in the highest degree necessary that a guaranted

[1] Luttrell, iv. 276. "From the Hague, September 17. The Duke of Portland arrived there from the Army, and after a conference with the English and Dutch Ambassadors returned next morning to his Majesty at Loo." And Prior to Lexington, September 17. "My Lord Portland has gained nothing more from the Marichal de Boufflers than a civil answer. The negotiation is on foot again, though the Imperialists take no more notice that the 20th is nigh than if it were never to come."

[2] Both Portland and the King had been obliged to write reassuring letters to the nervous Secretary after the bogus Jacobite plot of Price and Chaloner. Shrewsbury was accused of having attempted to secure the escape of Sir John Fenwick.

treaty which has already been talked about should be discussed as soon as possible, for he had positive intelligence, that immediately on the conclusion of peace, France would send out her emissaries and leave nothing undone in order to win over this or that Prince of the Empire. . . . To the Emperor it especially mattered on account of the Spanish Succession."

A united Empire could withstand the power of France. William and the States-General were prepared to help him, but with a disunited Empire it would be well-nigh impossible for them, though to both powers it was of the utmost importance that the Spanish Monarchy should not leave the possession of the Imperial House. "The kernel and key of French politics," Portland insisted was the Spanish Succession. In the course of their conversation which was continued on following days, he reminded the Ambassador: "The King of England is not immortal; if this fatality occurs, if then France were to find the present Allies disunited, how would it stand with Europe?"

Portland sailed at the end of October, and the King wrote on the last day of the month: "It is impossible to be in greater impatience than I am to have news of you since the wind changed here the night you embarked and I know how much you suffer on the sea."

The following letter from Portland to de Vaudemont was written very shortly after his return. The King, he says, is

"expected here with great impatience, will be received here with universal joy, for which this town makes great preparations . . . the unique interest that I take in all that touches his honour and his interest makes me see this with pleasure, and from another point of view causes me to wait anxiously what your representations will have effected in another direction, although I protest I have not the least intention of profiting by it. I believe affairs here will follow a course that will please him, provided that he behaves more as a master, which he has not done, towards those who eat his bread, and who must necessarily depend upon him."

By November 4 William had learnt of Bentinck's safe arrival at Whitehall. He writes in excellent spirits with something of the gaiety and confidence of his early letters:

"We celebrated St. Hubert on Saturday and took two great stags, the first at Dorewaert, one of the largest that I ever remember to have taken; it carried 16 the other 14. The Prince de Vaudment was in at the death of both. To-night we hold the drinking bout. There in a few words are the details of our St. Hubert."

The King adds:

"I took care that My^{L} Woodstock was not at the hunt, much less at the supper. You may, however, believe that he was not a little mortified, but I did not dare to take it upon myself since you said you did not desire it. It is impossible to love you more perfectly than I do."

On November 8 the King wrote approving of the projected scheme for the reform of the troops which Bentinck had sent him, but "I fear that Parliament will be with great difficulty induced to continue 30,000 men" in service. He adds that the French are delaying the evacuation of the fortresses and that "it may easily happen that they will play one of their accustomed tricks. Things are not yet in that tranquil state which we wished." The King mentions an interview that he was to have next day with the French Ambassador. An interesting letter from Callières describes this conversation, in which William spoke of his desire for repose, the misery of war to the people, and his love for Holland. "He speaks French well and has no foreign accent. He speaks thick and very slowly." [1]

November 17 found the King still at the Hague, anxiously waiting a favourable wind to sail for England. "God grant," he wrote, "that the good disposition towards me of which you speak may continue but the changeable humour of the nation makes me fear everything." Yesterday, the King adds, his birthday had been celebrated by

[1] Grimblot, 136.

"a great ball, at which the Princess de Vaudemont did the honours, and all went off well, except for some quarrels which there were among the ladies, which never fail on these occasions."

The King arrived in England in the middle of November, going to Lord Romney's house at Greenwich and making his State entry into London from there. Prince George and Keppel were with him in the coach. The public and spontaneous rejoicings with which the news of peace had been received in England were redoubled when the King returned. His journey was a triumphal progress; not only was peace restored but prosperity had revived, the country was united, freedom of conscience was secured, the danger of foreign invasion, the burden of war were at an end. William was at the height of his popularity and seemed to all but himself to be at the zenith of his success. On the evening of his arrival in the country where his greatness was so little understood, and which he so little loved, he wrote to Heinsius:

"I arrived here this evening after having passed through the city amidst the lively acclamations of the people. I do not know that I have ever seen so many well dressed persons among them. It is impossible to conceive what joy the peace causes here."

And Portland wrote to de Vaudemont the same day:

"I do not doubt that your Highness has received the news of the successful crossing of the King. He entered London to-day amid extraordinary acclamations of joy, and the greatest concourse of people that I think can ever have been seen, or could be seen in any other town in the world."[1]

A later letter seems to have been written by order:

". . . I can assure you, Sir, that you would have been satisfied if you knew how much the King tells me he regretted quitting you, and the pleasure that he has had in your company, and that of Madame la Princesse de Vaudemont.

[1] Egerton MSS. 24205.

I am rejoiced that you have received the Governorship of Milan, since you wished it, and it is to your advantage, but I can only regard it with pain when I think that we are going to lose you. At least I flatter myself with the hope of seeing you in France. . . . Affairs have greatly changed their aspect in this country owing to the peace."

All those who formerly held aloof and had Jacobite leanings now hastened to pay court to the King.

December 2 was appointed for the celebration of peace, and the next day Parliament met. The King had been doubtful of its temper. His expectations were fulfilled. He hoped for at least 30,000 men. The subject provoked the strongest animosity. It is difficult now to realise how greatly a standing army was feared and hated, regarded as it was as a menace to national liberty and safety and an instrument of arbitrary power. The King knew that they had just signed a peace that was no peace—hardly an armistice. In his speech from the Throne he told his people : " The circumstances of affairs abroad are such, that I think myself obliged to tell you my opinion that for the present England cannot be safe without a land force." The blame for such a declaration was thrown upon the detested Sunderland. His resignation to some extent appeased the House of Commons. A force of 10,000 men and 3000 marines was eventually conceded, and disbanded officers were to be retained on half pay. A burden of arrears still rested on the nation, who found themselves, now that peace was declared, with taxation heavy enough to have carried on a war ten years earlier.

At the close of the year Lord Portland wrote again to the Prince de Vaudemont. He feared greatly that the Prince would have begun his journey to Milan before his own arrival in Paris,

" which," he says, " causes me great disquietude, as apparently my journey will not be very long, and I should be inconsolable if I were to miss the only opportunity on which I can hope to have the satisfaction of opening my heart to your Highness, and of convincing you that my conduct is founded on reason, and that what I do, or shall do, should never lessen the

opinion and the kindness that your Highness has shown himself to have for me, and that I will try always to deserve, dear to me as your Highness is. The manner, and the permitted impertinences continue on the same footing before all the world, and that, together with the silence of your Highness on the things, about which I believed you would have written to me in cipher, point out to me the road that I have to take. May God grant that I acquit myself honourably. This ambassadorship makes me more apprehensive from day to day, seeing the conduct of France."

He adds that they are only sending the Comte de Tallard to England; and that King James and all the English refugees are still at St. Germains contrary to promises received. . . . A gentleman has already been sent to Paris to make preparations for his stay there—" a sensible capable man, he is called M. d'Allonne and was secretary to the late Queen." [1]

[1] Egerton MSS. Dec. 10 (20), 1697.

CHAPTER XI

1698

BENTINCK'S FRENCH EMBASSY

THE year 1698 was in some respects the most important of Bentinck's career, not that the value of his Paris Embassy exceeded, or even equalled, that of his mission to Germany ten years earlier, when he put the finishing touches to William's carefully thought out scheme of the Grand Alliance; but it brought him into a position of public prominence and influence greater than any he had hitherto assumed, even as the King's intimate confidential adviser. It has been said that he was sent to Paris because William found his growing resentment at the indulgence shown to Keppel irksome; there is nothing to show that this was true. Portland was the only man capable of undertaking such an office. No Englishman knew the King's mind, or was sufficiently acquainted with the intricacies of European politics.

Lord Portland's mission was concerned with three main points. He was:

(1) To devise expedients for preventing a war on the death of the King of Spain without children.

(2) To induce Louis XIV. (*a*) to remove James II. from France, or at least from the Court.

(3) (*b*) To refuse shelter in France to conspirators against King William's life.

Secret instructions to this effect were written by the King's own hand.

The Embassy was popularly supposed to be merely complimentary:[1]

"It is said Marshal Boufflers and the French Ambassadors have complimented his Majestie at Loo upon

[1] See Add. MSS. 28942, etc., for William III.'s letter of recommendation to Louis XIV. of "Mon cousin le Comte de Portland."

his accession to the throne, and thereupon the Earl of Portland goes Ambassador to France to return the compliment." [1]

The selection and appointments of his house in Paris gave the prospective Ambassador much anxiety :

"I am troubled about what they tell me," he writes to the Prince de Vaudemont, "that there are no houses to let to be found in Paris, except the 'Hôtel de la Reyne Marguerite,' which is very mediocre ; from what they tell me here I shall not find reasonably good furniture in the house, and also one finds none to be bought except of a common kind ; and in consequence of all the plate having been melted down last year, there is nothing at all to be found, and time does not permit of having any large pieces made, either basins or drinking vessels, which would take several whole months, so that I shall make a very poor appearance, since people here consider that I ought to have rich furniture, and to have hangings for a room, and a bedstead, and a large service of plate, and I shall have neither the one nor the other."

As soon as the King is returned Lord Portland says he will send a gentleman to France to get what is necessary. Meanwhile he asks the Prince to give him a letter of recommendation to Villeroy or another who will advise him, as the refugees in England have been so long out of France that they would be unacquainted with present customs and were besides not for the most part "du grand monde."

Bentinck started on his journey on January 20,[2] crossing the Thames from Whitehall to Lambeth, where his carriages were in waiting. He dined at Rochester and slept at

[1] Luttrell, iv., October 2.

Note.—On the eve of his departure occurred the disastrous fire at Whitehall, in which the famous Palace was totally destroyed, leaving only the Banqueting Hall as a monument of its past. An heterogeneous mass of buildings running down to the water's edge, it was to be regretted historically rather than architecturally. The King, who could not live there, regretted it on neither count, though he admitted that the loss was serious. The offices of the Privy Council, Secretary of State, and Treasury had been within its precincts and shared in the common ruin.

[2] From a MSS. at Pau quoted by Grimblot, p. 159.

Sittingbourne; the next day Dover was reached in the late afternoon. Contrary winds prevented his sailing till the 23rd, and the crossing was then very slow as there was hardly any breeze, and Calais was not reached till nine o'clock. It was a calm moonlight night, and His Excellency, landing the same evening, was received by the Commandant of Calais, at whose house he spent the night. Portland's carriage had been brought over with him, and one of his equerries was in waiting at Calais with carriages and saddle horses from Holland; but carriages and horses had to be hired for his retinue. On the 24th he continued his journey. He was everywhere received with military honours. It is interesting to follow his route. From Calais he went to Boulogne, where he spent the night, stopping the next day, Sunday, at Montreuil, and here one of his chaplains delivered a sermon. The two following nights he slept at Abbeville and Amiens, where he was received with much pomp and ceremony and was entertained by the Intendant. Continuing his journey on the 29th, he dined at Breteuil, and slept at St. Just. On the following day Lusarche was reached, where he was met by his son, Lord Woodstock, who had arrived in Paris from Holland a few days before. M. d'Allonne, whose rivalry had alarmed poor Huygens, was also in waiting to receive him. He had been sent to Paris a month earlier to make the necessary arrangements.

From Lusarche Bentinck continued his journey in a carriage of M. de Boufflers, drawn by eight horses and attended by an equerry and a number of footmen. The next day he dined at St. Denis, and afterwards visited the Church and Treasury, arriving in Paris as the short winter's day was closing in at four in the afternoon. He was lodged at the Hôtel d'Auvergne, in the Rue de la Planche, whose owner had placed it at the King's disposal for the Ambassador's residence. A dining-room had been hurriedly built in the gardens to give additional space, but even so it was necessary to distribute the gentlemen who formed his retinue in lodgings in the neighbourhood, and to stable the ninety carriage and saddle horses that travelling in State in those days necessitated. Matthew Prior was Secretary of Legation, and the historian Rapin accompanied Lord Woodstock as his tutor. Boufflers lost no time in waiting on the Ambassador on the evening of his arrival and invited him to dine on the following day.

Unfortunately Portland's State reception was delayed, because the ship, which had on board his equipage and three of his carriages, was icebound on the Seine. Prior was dispatched to Versailles to give this information to de Torcy, Secretary of State, and to request a private audience with Louis XIV. Meanwhile William, out of health and lonely, was waiting impatiently for the letters, which in these days were so slow to come, dependent as they were on winds and tides. It appears from his first letter that Bentinck had again broached the subject of his retirement before leaving England. The King wrote on the very day of his departure. The letter was carefully preserved by Bentinck, though he makes no allusion to it in any of those he wrote to the King which have survived.

"Assuredly I am so touched by your departure, more than you are capable of believing, and if you have as much pain in leaving me, as I have in seeing you go, I should be well content, and should hope that you would no longer doubt the solemn oath that I made you. It is assuredly the greatest truth that I have ever told in my life, and there is nothing except death that could make me change." [1]

In every letter of the King's there are the kindest expressions of anxiety for Bentinck's safety and comfort—"I have received your letter from Dover and Calais," he writes on January 21 (31), "and I am very sorry that you have had so bad a passage." "Vernon received yesterday your letter from Montreuil." "I fear that the hard frost and the snow will have very much inconvenienced you on the road."

The King goes on to say:

"Vernon will give you the most essential information . . . as to what is passing in Parliament, where enmities increase

[1] Original French:

"Kensington ce 10 de Janvier (O.S.).

". . . Asseurément je suis si touché de vostre départ plus que vous ne sauriez croire, et si vous avez eu autant de peine à me quitter que je n'ay eu de vous voir partir, je serois très content et poures espérer que vous ne doutez plus du serment solenel que je vous ay fait, c'est asseurément la plus grande verité que j'ay dit de ma vie, et il n'y a que la mort qui pourra me faire changer de sentiment. G."

WILLIAM BENTINCK, EARL OF PORTLAND.
From a painting by Simon du Bois.

every day, of which one cannot judge the results. You know by experience that this sometimes turns out well, sometimes ill, and we cannot be sure till the end of the session. What is certain is that I shall only have the £350,000 for the maintenance of troops this year, and it will be necessary to make it go as far as possible. There are besides hopes of increasing the number of the regiments of marines but this is very uncertain. . . . I have found an expression in one of your letters from Dover which has deeply wounded me (*m'a beaucoup mortifié*). I adjure you to decide nothing, even so much as in your thoughts, until I see you again.[1] I always love you the same. G."

The private audience which Bentinck had requested de Torcy to arrange for him was fixed for February 4. The night before he was entertained by the Duc de Grammont at a grand fête, at which the principal noblemen of the Court were presented to him. The next day he was escorted to Versailles by M. de Boufflers in one of his carriages. His audience took place at nine o'clock.

On February 3 Bentinck wrote to the Prince de Vaudemont to arrange the meeting about which he was so anxious.

"Paris. February 3, 1698.

"I arrived here last Friday and found my people, but the ship which contains my baggage is stopped at Havre de Grace by ice and contrary winds, which delays and embarrasses me. Meanwhile I have asked for a private audience, which is granted for to-morrow morning. In the meantime I cannot yet judge how they are disposed here, and what satisfaction they will give me, with regard to essential things; as for civilities and honours, I believe they will show them to me; at least people are persuaded of it, and even the King pays me civilities through M. de Boufflers and M. le Duc de Grammont, who he knows are among my friends. I am in despair over what Madame la Duchesse d'Elboeuf has told me that you don't think you will leave till the month of May. I propose to go and meet you in whatever place you will

[1] "Je vous conjure de ne rien determiner seulement autant qu'en vos pensées jusques à ce que je vous revois."

pass, if it is only possible for me to join you, and I have already arranged with M. le Duc d'Elboeuf to go to Reyns, where he thinks you will be obliged to take your route. I beg you to let me know what I may hope for concerning it, for I assure you, I shall be inconsolable if I do not have the honour of seeing you."

On January 28 (February 7) the King wrote to Heinsius that he had not received any news from Portland since his arrival in Paris. The first of Bentinck's letters which has been preserved, and that only a fragment, is dated February 5, and gives an account of his interview with Louis XIV.

". . . I said that I could never have doubted his good intentions, after he had given assurance to your Majesty, that the war that your Majesty had been obliged to make on him would never diminish his esteem or his friendship after peace was made; on which the King replied that what M. de Boufflers had said to me was by his orders, that it was still and always would be his sentiment, that he was certain that all the harm that could be done had been done during the war, it was necessary to forget the past, and think only of doing good to one another in the future; and then without waiting for me to say anything for myself, he said many very obliging things. I thanked him for having so graciously anticipated me, and I begged him very humbly that since your Majesty had done me the honour of employing me he also would do me that of accepting me. He replied very favourably and obligingly and said 'Certainly, Monsieur. It is very agreeable to be a Minister when the King, your master, and I are so strongly of the same opinion.' I asked permission to wait on him after he was returned from Marli while waiting till I could have my public audience, to which he replied that I might do so, and that that would be very agreeable to him."

Portland had also had audiences with other members of the Royal family, with the Dauphin, " the three princes his children, with Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne, and with Monsieur and Madame." The names of all these members of

the Royal Family were, of course, familiar to William. He knew the Dauphin, or "Monseigneur," as he was generally called at Court, as the son of Louis XIV. and Marie Thérèse and heir to the throne. His three children, the Duc de Bourgogne, father of Louis XV., the Duc d'Anjou, afterwards Philip V. of Spain, and the Duc de Berri, were, of course, also known to him, as well as the Duchesse de Bourgogne, the spoiled darling of Louis XIV. and Madame de Maintenon. "Monsieur" the Duc d'Orleans, the King's brother, was uncle to William by his first wife, the beautiful Henrietta, sister of Charles II.; "Madame," the second Duchesse d'Orleans, came of that Palatine Electoral House whose territory Louis XIV. had devastated, and whose graves his soldiers had violated.

She was the friend and well-wisher of William besides being his kinswoman.[1] Lord Portland's attentions were very welcome to her, though they aroused the jealousy of "Monsieur." She wrote to her aunt, the Electress Sophia of Hanover:

"Yesterday I had the pleasure of conversing for a long time with my Lord Portland. He told me that he had often had the honour of paying his respects to you, and that he could not enough admire the perfection with which you speak English and Dutch. Monsieur, who, as you know, does not exactly regard attentions paid to myself with a favourable eye, does not like my Lord Portland to come and see me, and converse with me so assiduously, and as he cannot forbid him to do so, he tries to dissuade me from it. 'This my Lord,' he says, 'only pays you so much attention in order to try and worm things out of you.' 'That might be to be feared in your case,' I replied, 'who might perhaps know the secrets of the King and the State, but I who know

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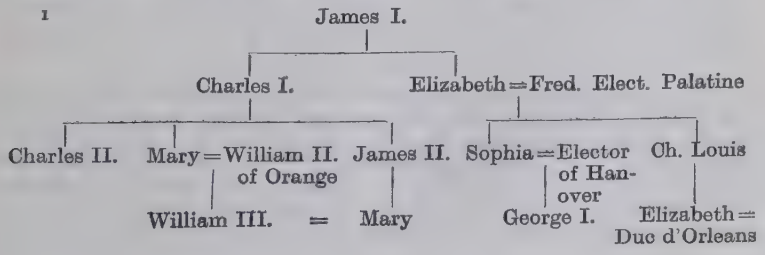


nothing at all of them, I have nothing to fear in being made to talk, and I very much like conversing with him, for he speaks of them that I honour and love; and that cannot injure anybody. You know, Monsieur, that when anyone talks to me about my aunt and my uncle and the Duke of Zel [Celle] I listen very willingly to those who speak.' To that he had nothing to say, but afterwards returning to the subject, 'That will be very displeasing to the King and Queen of England at St. Germains.' 'I do not want to know about that,' I said. 'I pity them, I should be willing to do them a service, but I cannot prevent myself from esteeming King William, for he deserves it, and I do not deceive them, I have never denied myself to them moreover, and I cannot refuse admittance to an ambassador from a King who is recognised as such, whom the King and yourself receive with such distinction, who pays attention to me himself, as well as being the bearer of a thousand civil messages from the King his master, who asks my friendship. In truth all that deserves that I should treat him well and pay him civilities in my turn, and the King and Queen at St. Germains are in the wrong if they find anything to complain of in it.' "

"Madame," who had had to suffer great mortifications at the French Court, took a sly pleasure in receiving with distinguished politeness an emissary from the late enemy of France. It afforded besides an unexceptional opportunity for annoying Monsieur, shining with reflected glory from le Roi Soleil. Prior describes him as a "little marionette with a cracked voice, who talks a great deal without saying anything." He struts across contemporary history on his high-heeled shoes, covered with ribbons, and profusely scented, his pockets always stuffed with sweets. Notwithstanding, he had great natural dignity and was an unerring authority on all the rules of social etiquette.

His complimentary visits concluded, Portland dined with de Torcy. He sent the King a list of the guests, among whom were de Boufflers, the Archbishop of Rheims, the Duc de Grammont, the Comte de Tallard, and several others. De Tallard was shortly to go as Ambassador to England. He is described by a contemporary as a "man of mediocre

height with suspicious eyes, full of wit and vivacity, consumed by ambition; no one trusted him, while everyone took pleasure in his society." [1]

Bentinck assured the King in writing that: "It is impossible to convey to your Majesty how much you are esteemed here, and what exalted ideas everyone has of you, or how eager all persons of quality are to express it to me."

A still more valuable testimony to the same effect is that of Prior, who writes:

"It is incredible what true respect and veneration they bear to King William (as they call him) and his merit, and how the soldiers particularly speak of him: 'Le premier homme de son métier!'—'Le plus beau Prince du monde!' are the least things they say of him." [2]

William himself was gratified to hear of the universal civility and attention with which his Ambassador was received on his arrival, and wrote to him, February 3 (13):

"I am very glad to learn that you have been so well received everywhere, especially the favourable assurances that the Most Christian King has made you with regard to myself, and you can always continue to assure him that I desire nothing more than to live with him in a very close relationship and intercourse, hoping that he will make the means of so doing easy to me. I am very glad too that he has allowed you to pay your court to him unofficially (*sans caractère*), thus I wish you to be as much as possible at Versailles, which can only be agreeable to you, since everybody has shown you so much civility."

The King was still expecting letters from Portland by the Duke of St. Albans, who had been detained by contrary winds. He continues:

"I am very anxious to learn how you find the manners and bustle of the country where you are, which must be so different from those in which you are accustomed to live. I think also that you will be able to hunt, and to see the

[1] See St. Simon.
[2] Longleat Papers. Hist. Com. Rep. iii. 278.

gardens, which you know are two of my passions. . . . One hears no more mention of my Lord Sunderland than if he were no longer in the world. . . . I do not know if the good Gourville is still in a condition to be seen, if he is, I much wish that you would see him and pay him compliments being one of my oldest acquaintances."

The Duke of St. Albans [1] had preceded Portland to Paris as Ambassador. He had merely gone to present the compliments of the King of England to the King of France on the marriage of his grandson, the Duke of Burgundy, with the Princess Marie Adelaide of Savoy. He was a natural son of Charles II.

Gourville, Bentinck informed his master, was now living in retirement on account of his age and infirmities, and he thought it unlikely that he would be able to see him. The old man was lodged in the pavilion of the Hôtel de Condé. In his memoirs he speaks of the weakness in his knees due to gout, and owns to a difficulty he felt in writing letters. He was now seventy-eight, a very advanced age for those days. In pursuance of his master's orders, Bentinck made an attempt to see him, and the visit took place. Gourville wrote his memoirs in 1702, and died the year after. In an appendix to his memoirs there is an inventory of his furniture with the prices attached, so that in imagination one can reconstruct the "Grand salon ayant une vue sur le jardin" in which he would have received the Ambassador. Gourville appointed three o'clock for the time of Bentinck's visit. For the first time in six years he had himself carried out of his bedroom "into my upstairs apartment which was very clean. The pleasure which this visit gave me, and the honour paid me by it, so rallied my spirits that I was able to acquit myself well enough in the conversation."

Gourville's account of this conversation is open to doubt. He reports Bentinck's having asked him on behalf of William, what he thought should be done to prevent war in the event of the King of Spain's death. Gourville replied that the general opinion was that the son of the Elector of Bavaria should be King of Spain. Bentinck remarked that this was

[1] William had commented on the delay in his return, "He must be very well amused where he is"; and Bentinck wrote in March that the Duke had left debts in the shops and borrowed money to pay them to avoid the disgrace of a distraint on his baggage.

his master's opinion, but he had forbidden him to say so before asking Gourville the question.

The King's next letter is dated Kensington, Feb. 8 (18).

"The Duke of St. Albans brought me your letter the day before yesterday. I am very glad that they continue to pay you civilities, and although perhaps corresponding realities will not follow, it is always well to have this beforehand. I consider that there is some reason for their not wishing you to enter upon business before you have had your public audience, although I think that you may accomplish much indirectly without however pushing things too far, for you know that I fear more refusals of whatever kind, and the position of affairs here, and in all Europe, is such that whatever they will do for me, should proceed from their own accord.

"I should be very vexed if you did not see Madame de M.: but I do not think you will arrive at it by means of the Countess de Gramont,[1] who is so strongly attached to the interests of St. Germains. Certainly I did not think they would have permitted the Duke of Berwick and M.[L.] Middleton and others to come to Versailles when you were there, I hope that in time you will be able to prevent it in future."

The position of the English Ambassador in Paris was a very delicate one. The presence of the fugitive Court of England at St. Germains, so near Paris, and in such continual intercourse with Versailles, would of itself have been embarrassing enough, but when in addition James's impecunious household included men who had been implicated in the plots upon William's life, and when he and they deliberately threw themselves in the way of the English Ambassador and his suite, they rendered the situation well-nigh impossible. Portland never seems to have realised that Madame de Maintenon, who from behind the scenes ruled the King of France, had espoused the cause of the Royal Martyrs to their faith, and would never suffer any diminution of their prestige. William seems to have grasped this in his

[1] The Countess de Gramont, the beautiful daughter of George Hamilton and sister of Anthony Hamilton, chronicler of the melancholy Court of St. Germains, author of the *Mémoires de Gramont*.

allusion to the Countess de Gramont. Prior sums up the situation in few words :

" These people are all the same, civil in appearance and hating us to hell at the bottom of their heart : they assure us one day of the continuance of their friendship, and tell King James the next they will never forsake him or let him go farther off than St. Germains." [1]

Bentinck, however, was very soon sufficiently explicit as to his views on the situation. Time had been occupied by paying and receiving ceremonial visits from persons of quality. He had attended the King's Levée on February 9, had visited Monsieur and Madame at the Palais Royal, had had an audience of the Duc de Chartres, the son of Monsieur who married Mademoiselle de Blois, one of the " three princesses," Louis XIV.'s illegitimate children. He also had an audience of Mademoiselle, granddaughter of Henri IV.

At Lord Portland's request de Torcy had arranged an audience for him with Louis XIV., which took place on February 17. He describes it and some discussions which preceded it, in the following letter, February 15–18. This very long letter is in Bentinck's handwriting with a post-script in another hand. It begins with a burst of indignation against the bad taste and bad manners of Louis XIV. in permitting the Jacobite leaders to come in contact with the English Ambassador :

" Marshal de Boufflers took an opportunity of speaking to me about the surprise and indignation that I had suffi-ciently evinced in public at seeing the Duke of Barwick, etc. at Versailles ; on which I replied that my blood curdled in my veins on their approach and that I hoped that it was not intended to accustom me to see the assassins of the King my master."

Bentinck thought from Boufflers's attempt to soften him that his behaviour on this occasion had been reported, and that Boufflers was speaking by order. For this reason he took the opportunity of expressing himself again on what he thought of the continued residence of King James in France, " and that they tolerated and supported in this

[1] Longleat MSS. Hist. MSS. Com. Report, iii. 204.

country wretches who had attempted your life, which was not in conformity with what we had agreed upon, or with what the King had done me the honour to express to me." Boufflers replied that it could not be said that "he had engaged the word of the King his master to make King James retire from the realm, and that I was too honest, and too much his friend to say such a thing."

Bentinck answered that he "had not been able to require this promise from him," as he was not in a position to give it, and "that the interest and the service of the King my master was nearer to my heart than all my friends put together."

Finding Bentinck quite obdurate on this point, Boufflers declared it would be too ungracious to press this matter so strongly, it would be better to leave it to the King to act of his own accord, rather than to ask it as a thing agreed upon. He also suggested that the matter might be settled by negotiations. Bentinck replied very reasonably that it was not fitting to enter into negotiations about a thing on which they should have come to a thorough understanding on either side, and without which he had declared peace could not be maintained. He reminded Boufflers that he had proposed Rome, and Boufflers, Avignon, as suitable places of retirement for King James, but that for the manner of it he had left that entirely in the hands of Louis XIV. After this the interview concluded with many compliments on either side.[1]

Shortly afterwards Marshal Villeroy sought out Portland and broached the same subject "in a very gentle and insinuating manner." He declared that Louis XIV. only acted "from compassion and pity" to James II.; as to the Duke of Berwick,[2] he was only present for the affair of the landing, and Sir George Barclay had been cashiered. To which Bentinck rejoined with some indignation that as to pity and compassion the King his master had sufficiently shown them in the large sum he proposed to settle on a man who had attempted his life,[3] and discussing further the question of harbouring English traitors, he added that as for the Duke of Berwick, it was known he had knowledge of the conspiracy. Altogether the Ambassador concluded from the foregoing

[1] As a translation of this letter has been printed *in extenso* by Grimblot, and it is extremely long, we have given it here in a slightly shortened form.

[2] The Duke of Berwick had full cognisance of the Assassination Plot.

[3] Referring to the proposal to pay Queen Maria Beatrice's jointure conditionally on the Court's removal from St. Germains.

that there was nothing favourable to be hoped for from an audience on this point.

After a day or two he applied to de Torcy requesting an audience with Louis XIV.; and was given one on the following day.

Portland writes to his master a full account of this audience, which took place at Versailles. Louis XIV. replied to Bentinck's statement of his case with regard to James II. and the English exiles that :

"he could not imagine why I asked that he should remove King James, that he was so near a relation, that he was grieved for his misfortunes, that he had assisted him for so long, and that in honour he could not send him away, that Marshal de Boufflers had told me the same thing positively at our interviews, that upon this I had desisted from my request, and that it ought to suffice that he gave his word that he would not help him, and that he would sincerely maintain the peace."

In reply Bentinck made two points :

(*a*) "I told him there could be no occasion for being touched with compassion for his retreat, since your Majesty had engaged to give him, or the Queen his wife, about £50,000 sterling annually to live elsewhere, (*b*) that if he refused to withdraw on these terms it could only be in the hope of using this money to foment troubles or something worse."

To this and more to the same effect, Louis replied that "he would never resolve to make him do it." On Bentinck's then raising the subject of the assassins the King loftily disclaimed all knowledge of them, affirming again that Berwick was only in England for the landing, and that Barclay was cashiered. Throughout this interview the King's manner was much colder, and as finally Louis reiterated that he could give no answer on either point the Ambassador withdrew. In conclusion he asks William for further orders,

"for which I pray very humbly. I remain your Majesty with the utmost submission and respect,

"Portland.

"Yesterday I again saw the Duke of Berwick at Versailles, my L[d] Middleton was there also."

On the 19th a postscript was added to this letter in another hand suggesting reprisals : Lord Portland explains that without having absolutely asserted that payment to James would be conditional on his retiring, he has given this quite clearly to be understood. Meanwhile he begs that William will not allow any Jacobites to remain in England contrary to Act of Parliament, and if he would give as a reason for this action the refusal of James to retire from St. Germains, that this would very much anger them against him, and perhaps force him to retire of his own accord. Almost a French subtlety is exhibited in this suggestion. The postscript concludes :

" Your Majesty will see what foundation there is for building peace upon, and how far one can believe protestations when their performance is contradictory. Your Majesty knows that this cannot surprise me, having expected it since you did me the honour to intend me for this employment."

The King [1] wrote in an encouraging tone to his disgusted Ambassador. He was no more surprised than himself, he said, at Louis XIV.'s refusal to make James II. retire, and no other answers could have been expected after the preliminary conversations with Villeroy and Boufflers. He reminds Portland that before he went he had told him that considering the position of affairs, this article would not be granted. William continues :

" It would have been more desirable that you should have received such a reply at the end of your negotiations than at the beginning, for this will greatly embarrass you with regard to all the rest, and above all, that which is the most important, the affair of the Spanish Succession. There is nothing to be done at present except not to speak of it any more, nor to urge it directly, unless an occasion should present itself."

If the Ambassador is pressed to arrange for the payment of Queen Mary's pension, he is to decline to do so till it is known where she and James are going to live. The King adds, with the breadth of view and fairmindedness that characterised him with regard to conspirators against his

[1] Kensington, February 13 (23).

own life: "It does not appear to me that there is any proof that the Duke of Berwick and Birkenhed were of the number, but by all appearances they were cognisant of it." The letter concludes:

"notwithstanding what has happened I should like you to continue to pay your court as often as before, which I believe will be distasteful to you (*vous faira quelque peine*) knowing your temperament as I do. But it is neither my interest nor my inclination to be offended at present; but to attempt not to see that which is done only too openly. I begin to be extremely impatient to have you with me again, loving you always the same.

"I cannot help telling you that I have felt rather unwell all this last week, having entirely lost my appetite and much depression of spirits."

William evidently thought that Bentinck had been lacking in tact in dealing so bluntly with the question of Louis XIV.'s toleration of the "Assassins" and James II., and in such a way as to offend his sense of his own dignity, and produce a diminution of cordiality. In writing to Heinsius (February 11 (21)) William again expresses his regret at Lord Portland's having begun with these questions to the prejudice of more important ones.

The next letter, dated February 22 (N.S.), was dictated by Portland to Prior, and was sent before he received the King's orders not to pursue the subject of the removal of the Court of St. Germains. The Ambassador had had an interview with De Pomponne, who said his master was very pleased with all Lord Portland had said, and truly anxious for a firm and solid peace and close union; but he reiterated the repugnance felt by Louis in insisting on the withdrawal of James II.

Portland replied that everyone in England and Holland considered the two points of James's withdrawal and the banishment of the conspirators as the inevitable result of peace, and that they should have been settled before his arrival. He dwelt on the remark occasioned in these two countries by Louis XIV.'s continuing to harbour assassins. He adds: "I believe the English in the Court of St. Germains will not be allowed in future to come where I

am." This was something gained, however. Incidentally the Ambassador remarked on the fact that all his letters to Holland on his private and family affairs were being opened; the covers had been returned to him. De Pomponne disclaimed any responsibility for this. There was another still more serious cause of annoyance. On going to Meudon the day before to pay his court to the King and the Dauphin, Villeroy had insinuated, "in order to give colour" to Louis's refusal to take any action with regard to James and the English refugees, that the King had heard those two points publicly talked of before they had been mentioned to himself, or his ministers; and that he was therefore bound in honour to do nothing. The implication was that Portland had been indiscreet. "It seems very extraordinary that they wish to make me responsible for the secrecy of a thing about which everyone was talking on my arrival," and he adds with a characteristic touch of his occasional sardonic humour that he had always been distrustful of his own eloquence, but he did believe he could be silent when necessary.[1]

The letter concludes: "The flooding of the river causes me much anxiety since it continues to prevent my baggage coming from Rouen here without which I am unable to make my entrée."

In his letters of February 8 (18) and 13 (23) William had remarked that affairs in Parliament were going on badly, as Portland would learn from others;[2] the Parliament was now debating the reduction of troops. Nothing short of an invasion, said the King, would rouse them to any sense of danger. He talks with a kind of disgusted weariness of their incapacity to take any but insular views.

On March 1 Bentinck replied in a hopeful strain to the King's forebodings:

[1] Dangeau notes, vol. vi. p. 297, that after Lord Portland's interview with him, Louis XIV. had orders given to Lord Middleton that he should beg James II. another time to avoid being present with his suite on the same day as the English Ambassador. February 17, 1698.

[2] To Heinsius, January 11 (21). The King speaks of the mischievous effect on France of the English Parliament's disbanding troops: their indifference to foreign affairs "is a punishment from Heaven."

Note.—Prior, writing on the same subject from Paris to the Earl of Jersey (February 1698), says: "Externally these people are very kind to us . . . but . . . I shall conclude that sooner or later we shall be attacked from hence, and that some standing force in England is no very impertinent thing." Hist. MSS. Com. Report.

"I am very sorry about what your Majesty says of affairs in England, but the weather is changing there after the rain to fine weather. Since my Ld. Sunderland is as if out of the world and his enemies talk no more about him than his friends, that will perhaps make it easier for your Majesty to do that which you proposed formerly.

". . . I would give an account of the gardens, houses, and hunts, but the villainous weather is the reason that I have not hastened to see the first, since everything would appear dead and dirty, and the fountains are not working because of the long frost, which has prevented the machines being able to draw the water to fill the reservoirs. The orange trees at Versailles are extremely beautiful and large and numerous, the trunks fine and high, but the heads not like those at Honslaerdyck. Those at Trianon are nothing much compared to the others. What is extraordinary here is that in this whole neighbourhood I have not found any fruit trees that I wanted and I have been obliged to send to Orleans to get them. Of all the thousands of flowers of which your Majesty has heard so much, that the flower gardens were full of them at all seasons, I have not seen a single one, not even a snowdrop, and the gardens all the winter less tidy than with us, they don't touch them. The whole thing is magnificent at Versailles, gardens and buildings, although for the latter one could find faults with them without being more of an architect than I am. The expenses are immense. Trianon is very agreeable and charming, but Meudon surpasses all in situation, and the air there must be like that at Windsor. The view is beautiful and rich, and the whole place would be to your Majesty's taste. . . . M. Tallard thinks of starting soon. I hope that considering the reception they have given me here, everything possible will be done for the French Ambassador."

Besides this intimate letter written for the King's private reading there was another of the same date dictated to Prior and dealing with the progress of his Embassy. He recapitulated the news of a former letter, the unfavourable

direction that affairs were taking, and the imputation brought against himself of having publicly spoken of the points he had come to negotiate before discussing them with the King or his ministers :

" They put into my mouth a thousand things which I never dreamed of saying and of which your instructions did not oblige me to speak, and which would be to the disadvantage of your Majesty, which has put me in very great difficulty."

William Bentinck, however, was not the man to sit down tamely under this sort of backhanded attack. He promptly changed his methods, sought out M. de Pomponne and de Torcy, remonstrated with them about what was happening, and insisted that they should acquaint Louis XIV. with the facts, so that he should not attribute to the Ambassador the follies of society (*sottises du monde*). As for the points on which he had been pressing, he had done so by his master's orders. Now having done his duty, he should urge them no further, " but leave it to the consideration of his Most Christian Majesty, who could himself weigh the importance of the affair, and could consider what his honour and interest demanded." Bentinck adds that he will take an opportunity of asking leave to go to Marli and of seeing Madame de Maintenon,[1] " who is so very unassuming with regard to all that concerns public affairs that she will not see any Minister." He concludes wearily that it is impossible for anyone coming into this Court to understand it at first, and as William himself had said, it was not a position to which he was inclined by temperament (*où mon tempérament penche*).

" However, I will do everything possible to try to know it a little in order to serve you in it . . . sincere men being as rare here as elsewhere and those who appear most frank are often the least straightforward."

Portland's tactics were so far successful that he noticed a marked renewal of cordiality on the part of the courtiers after this self-assertion on his part. He believed it was by Louis XIV.'s orders.

[1] In this he never succeeded.

William wrote [1] to say he had not thought it desirable as yet to make public the refusal with which his Ambassador has been met.

"You do very well," he says, "to continue as you have begun to write me two separate letters, one that I can show, and the other for my private information. . . . I am inclined, when Count Tallard comes, to talk with him myself conversationally about the retirement of King James, but I should like first to have your opinion concerning it. With regard to the other point which concerns the assassins I shall not speak of it to him, believing that that is beneath me. . . . I am sorry that the arrival of your baggage delays your entrée and consequently prolongs your embassy. . . . I always love you the same. G."

At last the tedious delay was at an end. On March 7 Bentinck wrote by the hand of a secretary to say his baggage had arrived and his entrée was fixed for the day after to-morrow. But even at the eleventh hour the Ambassador had to insist upon his rights. M. de Torcy sent to say that the carriage of the Duchesse de Verneuil would take precedence of that of the English Ambassador as she was descended from a natural "son of France." To this Bentinck gave an unconditional refusal, saying that he intended his carriage to follow immediately after that of the Comte de Toulouse, otherwise he should descend from his carriage and would not make his entrée without acquainting the King of England with the matter and receiving further orders from him. The Ambassador's firmness resulted in an immediate withdrawal of this pretension on the part of the Court of France.

"I am greatly rejoiced," he continues, "to learn that your Majesty's health is better. May God in his infinite mercy preserve your life and your health long years."

("J'ay une joye infinie d'apprendre qu'elle (sa majesté) se porte mieux, Dieu preserve sa vie et sa santé longues années dans sa bénédiction suprême.")

Alluding to William's recommendation to overlook affronts wherever possible, Portland admits: "I own that this does not agree with my humour or my temperament,

[1] Kensington, February 22 (March 3).

but one must overcome this kind of weakness, when one is aware of it, and it is done in your service, bearing in mind the saying of the late Lord Rochester,[1] that one must live in the world as if one were of it.

While waiting for his public entrée Portland had secured another informal conversation with Louis, whom he had waylaid as he was returning from Mass at Versailles, and requested the honour of speaking with him. On this occasion Louis XIV. was all graciousness and declared how anxious he was for the continuance of William's friendship and the maintenance of peace. The Ambassador replied that his master would be prepared "to come more than half way to meet him," "on which the King said that he would do all that could reasonably be expected of him; enforcing the assurances that he had just made with many obliging expressions, and an open and smiling face." In order to avoid any future annoyance of the kind he had had to complain about to de Torcy and Pomponne, Bentinck begged the Most Christian King to tell him if there were anything displeasing to him in his conduct, and to discuss any private matter with him directly, as he could then answer for its being kept secret. "He replied in terms that are too obliging for me to repeat in a letter, and enough to flatter a man who knew himself less than I do." Bentinck respectfully submitted to William that perhaps it was better after all to have received a refusal at the beginning, instead of the end of the Embassy, because this would perhaps facilitate discussion of the other points.

The Ambassador was evidently puzzled by the conduct of the French Court. On the one hand all sorts of difficulties were thrown in his way in a backstairs manner; on the other the Court of St. Germains, ostensibly the supreme difficulty, appeared to evince a wish to approach him, and that not merely from the desire to add to them.

He remarks that "The Duc de Lauzun, the principal counsellor to King James, affects to be civil to me to a degree that surprises everyone, with what object I do not know." As King James frequently hunted with the Dauphin, Bentinck was prevented from doing so: "not wishing to find myself in his company, though by the favourable manner in which everyone says he speaks of me, it is believed he would not make any difficulty about finding himself in

[1] John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester.

mine." After mentioning an invitation from Monsieur to visit him at St. Cloud the week before Easter, Bentinck continues :

"I do not think the beds and furniture that are made here would be at all to your Majesty's taste, for everything well made is decorated with gold or silver lace or embroidered with it, the beds are all square on the outside up to the top."

He goes on to say that furniture in France continues to be made in the old-fashioned way because in the great houses there is so much rich family furniture, which would otherwise be out of fashion. It would be better to have the furniture for Loo made in England.

Portland would have been surprised if he could have known how his treatment by the courtiers was viewed by one among them who knew the intricacies of that brilliant hollow world through and through.

"His suite was numerous and superb," wrote St. Simon ; "his expenditure on a most magnificent scale at table, in horses, liveries, equipages, furniture, dress, crockery, in everything ; and he displayed besides exquisite taste and refinement. Portland himself was characterised by a personal distinction, a polish, an air of a man of the world and of a courtier, gallant and graceful manners which surprised everyone. With all that, he had much dignity, even haughtiness, exercised however with discernment and ready judgment, which risked nothing. The French who run after a novelty, good entertainment, good cheer and magnificence were charmed with him. He won them over, but with discrimination, like a man acquainted with our Court, and who only desired good and distinguished company. Soon it became the fashion to see him, to have fêtes for him, and to receive banquets from him. The astonishing thing is that the King himself occasioned it, by doing for this Ambassador what he had never done for any other. Thus all the Court vied with one another. One evening the King gave him the candle at his 'Coucher,' which is a favour

only shown to the most considerable persons, and those the King wishes to distinguish." [1]

The Ambassador himself was concerned about the enormous cost entailed by his stay in Paris and alludes more than once to it. "In truth the expenditure is excessive," he says, writing on March 9. In the same letter he advises the King that it will be better to wait to speak to Tallard about James II. till they see "Comment tout tourne." Bentinck had now received permission to visit Marli as soon as the fountains were in order. He is writing just before Holy Week, when "Great devotions will occupy the Court."

It is difficult to tell how long letters took even in the most favourable circumstances in reaching London from Paris, the time varied greatly, depending as it did on winds and tides, but Bentinck's letters of February 16, 17, and 18 reached William before February 23. The following must have crossed those of Bentinck :

February 26 (March 8). "The refusal you have experienced is beginning to be known here. It was thought better that it should come from the Jacobites than from my ministers. This might make a better effect and impression on the Parliament, but to speak frankly I do not think this will matter one way or the other, since here they think at present of nothing, turning everything to their own ends. For example, I think if King James were obliged to withdraw from France they would say there is certainly no more to fear, and if he stays there they will take no notice of it. This is now the prevailing spirit here, where they think of nothing at all except of one party's injuring the others . . . but what is certain is that the Wiggs do not desire the return of my Lord Sunderland : they make no secret of it.[2] He seems to wish to return."

The King agreed with Portland's advice concerning Tallard, and wrote at once, March 2 (12), to say he should wait to speak to him till his Ambassador thought the time

[1] See also Dangeau, p. 339, vol. vi.

[2] Sunderland wrote to Shrewsbury : "When I laid down the place of Chamberlain, I did so with a desire never to have anything to do again in public business." February 24 (March 6), 1698.

favourable. William was taken with the idea of the French furniture decorated with gold which Bentinck had described. He gives orders for a piece of furniture with gold galoon, as he does not like silver, to be made for his bedroom at Dieren, and adds, "if you find that they make camp bedsteads better than they do here, you might have one made for me also."

At last the important day of the Ambassador's public entrée arrived. It took place on March 9 and he wrote a full account of it to William on the 13th, Prior having received orders to send an account of the ceremonial to England for the use of future Ambassadors. All went well till Portland reached the Hôtel des Ambassadeurs.

"The King had sent M. le Duc d'Aumont, his first gentleman of the bedchamber, to compliment me; after which Madame the Duchess de Bourgogne sent the Marquis de Villa serre (Villa cerf). They began then to make new pretensions, wishing that I should go to receive him half way down stairs like the former, and I would only receive him at the door of the ante-chamber, which was at the top of the stairs, which caused prolonged disputes as he had stopped half way down."

This point was adjusted by Portland's offering to descend a few steps to meet him, on which he came up. At his departure the Conductor of Ambassadors made great complaints because Portland, after conducting him to his carriage, did not wait to see him drive off.

It would be tedious to recapitulate all the difficulties raised by the Conductor of Ambassadors, M. Boneuil, which were all of the same kind, and as manifestly absurd. Portland behaved with the greatest firmness, declining to deviate in the least from his instructions. The next day he made strong representations to Pomponne and de Torcy for the annoyance and difficulties caused by the Conducteur of Ambassadors. Boneuil himself came to see Portland, and arrived "abashed and confounded" (*honteux et interdit*), having evidently received a reprimand from Versailles, which Bentinck amplified.

The audience, for which all arrangements were now complete, passed off satisfactorily. The Ambassador was very well received by Louis, who reiterated all he had

previously said to Bentinck about the preservation of peace and his esteem for William "in extraordinarily civil and obliging terms."

In a second letter the Ambassador repeats that every conceivable difficulty was thrown in his way in the matter of the ceremonial for his entrée and audience. He was impressed by the public interest shown on this occasion, and surprised to see so great a crowd not only of the Paris mob but everyone of any importance, and "everyone of quality in town of all ages and both sexes were at the balconies and windows." On the Pont Neuf some people exclaimed: "Good Heavens, what do we see to-day? Something well deserving our curiosity, the solemn entry of a king that we burned on this same bridge eight years ago." [1] "As for my public audience, I was received in the most obliging manner in the world." The crowd was so great that it was some time before the Ambassador could approach the King, whom he saw and by whom he was seen without being able to get near him, another device perhaps to impress him with the Most Christian King's state and importance. "When at last I approached him, he spoke first, saying he was vexed at the difficulty I had had on my entrée, but that he was very glad to see so many English and French mingled together." After Portland had delivered his speech, Louis replied at equal length with the strongest expressions of friendship for King William, and approval of his Ambassador: "Il me dit des choses extremement obligeantes pour moy, et me congedia comme il m'avoit parlé d'un visage obligeant et riant." ("He said some extremely obliging things to me on my own behalf, and dismissed me, as he had talked to me with a kind and smiling face.") "Your Majesty knows the nation too well not to understand how all the courtiers remark upon all this." They hastened to point out that the King had never been known to speak first to an Ambassador, nor in so familiar a manner.

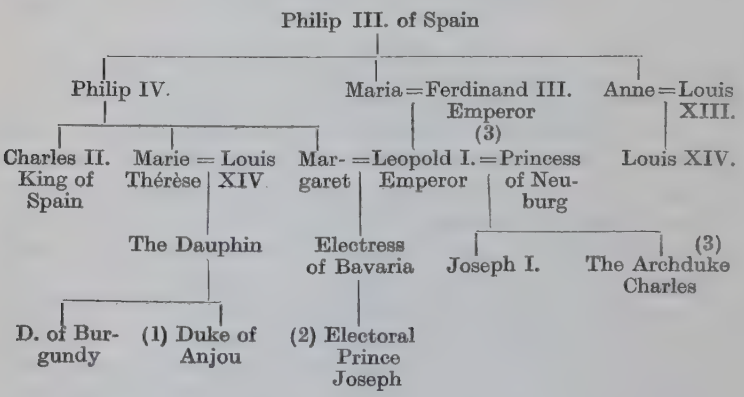
After so much expectation, so many delays, the public audience seems a little flat and lacking in importance, as if it were merely done to impress the courtiers and give the world at large the impression that the Most Christian King really meant business. At any rate this well-performed

[1] In July 1690, when rumours came to Paris that William had died of his wounds after a great victory won by James.

comedy did not deceive Portland. He turns as if with relief to the discussion of English affairs, hopes that the return of Shrewsbury may serve to reunite the "Wiggs," and change their attitude to my Lord Sunderland.

"Your Majesty tells me that I am very lucky to be away in order not to see that which I am not able to prevent, but it is just the same here, where moreover they play me so many tricks [1] over all business and ceremonies."

So far Portland had avoided any mention of the first subject on which it was hoped that some understanding might be reached with France, that of the Spanish Succession, a question that was at this time agitating the whole of Europe. This monarchy's vast possessions were held together by the slender threads of the Spanish King's life. Charles II. had no children; the claimants to his dominions were powerful and numerous, only some agreement among them could avert war on his death. The following genealogical table will make this sufficiently obvious.



It will be seen that the Dauphin was the next heir to Charles II. in descent, and that the second claimant was the Electress of Bavaria, the third the Emperor Leopold himself. But matters were not nearly so simple as that. Both Charles II.'s sisters had formally renounced their claims to the Spanish dominions on their marriage. Leopold's mother

[1] "On me fait tant de chicanes."

had made no such renunciation. If, therefore, these renunciations held good, the Emperor had prior claim to succession. Both the Emperor and the Dauphin, knowing that the other European Powers would oppose their acquisition of such an inheritance, passed on their claims, the Dauphin to his second son, the Duke of Anjou, the Emperor to his second son by his second marriage, the Archduke Charles of Austria. The Electress of Bavaria passed on her claim to her son, the Electoral Prince. Thus there were three claimants: Louis XIV.'s grandson, the Duke of Anjou; the Emperor's grandson, Joseph, the Electoral Prince; and the Emperor's son, the Archduke Charles. Even so, it was held the accession to such an inheritance by either of these three claimants would endanger the balance of power in Europe. For the dominions of Spain, it must be remembered, then included the Spanish Netherlands, the Milanese, the two Sicilies, besides the large possessions in the New World known as the Indies.[1] In this great inheritance there was no cohesion of race or government and no strong central authority. Some sort of partition among the claimants, which should give the predominance to the weakest, was an obvious solution; but as yet nothing had been accomplished. The Electoral Prince was still a child, his succession was the least dangerous to the peace of Europe on the death of the feeble degenerate who now sat on the Spanish throne.

On March 14 Portland had an unexpected visit from Pomponne and Torcy, who after stating that the subject they had come to discuss was one concerning which the utmost secrecy was to be observed, explained that Louis XIV. wished to enter into some engagements with William with a view to averting another European war on the death of the King of Spain, naïvely suggesting that if Spain fell to the Empire it would cause that power to preponderate in Europe to a dangerous extent. Bentinck, with his characteristic caution, expressed surprise at the communication, and added that his master could not give any but a general answer to such a proposal, till his Most Christian Majesty declared his views more in detail. This Louis XIV.'s ministers declined to do till William's views were known, at least in general terms. Bentinck was careful to give them merely his own. He wrote the King a hurried account of the interview, apologising for the faults of his letter, which was not

[1] *I.e.* Mexico, Peru, Chili and Cuba, etc.

of a kind to be shown to any of his people, as he had not even time to read it over, for the Dauphin had sent for him to go hunting and he could not well keep him waiting.

The conversation of the two French ministers with Bentinck was reported by themselves at great length to Louis XIV. Bentinck had pointed out to them that William must be guided by the interests of England and Holland, and that the English jealousy of the power of France was as lively as ever. The ministers, while protesting that Louis was only anxious not to increase this jealousy, replied that the Emperor was negotiating through Count Harrach at Madrid to get the Archduke invited there, and that his accession to the Spanish throne would revive the Empire of Charles V., and thus be of equal menace to the peace of Europe. Portland said this was not so, that commerce and navigation were the two sole subjects that had power to interest the English. The Empire had no navy, and the decadent power of Spain could not for long acquire one, while the powerful navy of France might well be a menace to their trade with the Indies and the Mediterranean. Pomponne and Torcy assured Portland that Louis was quite willing to so dispose of the succession that it should never be united with France. Portland dotted the "i's" by replying that it would be equally dangerous for Europe to see the whole Spanish inheritance pass into the hands of the Duke of Berri or of Anjou. No such danger would accrue from the accession of the Archduke Charles, by which Spain would be a separate Government.[1] Finally the Ambassador made his point: By the will of Philip IV. (failing male heirs his crown should devolve on Margaret and her descendants), he said, the Electoral Prince of Bavaria was the legitimate heir. That solution would put an end at once to the jealousy felt by all Europe of the power of France, and the anxiety shown by France as to that of the Emperor. It was then agreed that a courier should be sent to England for instructions.

No more important news could at this juncture have reached William. He at once sent Portland's letter to Heinsius, asking him to write to the Ambassador secretly by a special courier and send his views on what course should be taken.[2] At the same time he wrote to Portland[3]

[1] Because France lay between Spain and the Empire.
[2] Heinsius, March 8 (18).
[3] March 9 (19).

from Windsor, expressing his pleasure at the success of his reception,

"and that everyone praises you so highly . . . it being impossible to take more interest than I do in all that concerns you. You did very well in not giving way about any part of the ceremonial. I have always praised your firmness on all occasions, which I shall continue to do provided that you do not put it in practice against me."

Continuing, the King expresses his surprise on receiving Portland's letter of the 15th with an account of the Pomponne and Torcy interview. This affair was so delicate and so important that William evidently feared to commit himself to writing ; he refers Portland to the instructions he gave him before he left England, highly commends the line he had taken with Pomponne, and recommends that he should maintain the same attitude to force the hands of the French diplomatists and oblige them to come to the point. He tells Portland further that when the occasion offers he is to say that William was so anxious for peace that he

"was not disinclined to listen to whatever they wished to propose for its continuance, even in case of the death of the King of Spain, which I feared like themselves could interrupt it and engage anew all Europe in the same war. You understand my intention which is by no means to break off this important negotiation, but on the contrary, to engage in it more and more closely to be able to see how far France will go, so that we can judge if we can enter into an engagement with her on so delicate an affair as the Spanish Succession. I own that I have so great an inclination to see no more war for the little time that remains to me to live, that of what I can do in honour and conscience to that end I will omit nothing. . . . It is impossible to love you more tenderly than I do and always shall do."

A postscript informs Portland that his young daughter has smallpox but it is not of a dangerous kind. This was Portland's eldest child, the Lady Mary Bentinck, of whose charm Huygens spoke. She was the daughter of Anne

Villiers and was now nineteen. She was married to Algernon Capell, 2nd Earl of Essex.

The King wrote again on March 14 (O.S.) to say that "the Countess of Essex is practically out of danger, having passed the 9th day and being as well as may be in her present state." William had just returned to Kensington from Windsor, where he had left Shrewsbury. Shrewsbury, who had come back to him with many protestations of zeal for his service, had had an attack of blood spitting, and now again sought to retire from public life. People in general would not believe his illness was serious as he had been hunting with the King. William himself did not know what to think; to him Shrewsbury's retirement was a matter both for regret and embarrassment. He remarked that it would make a great fracas, especially among those who feared Sunderland's return.[1]

In Paris both sides were so cautious that it becomes tedious to follow in detail the steps of this negotiation. Portland had a private audience with Louis a few days after he had received the King's letter and reported his instructions.[2] Louis blandly expressed his incredulity that the King of England could have been taken by surprise at his communication. He was sure that William must have thought of it, though he may not have expected that these overtures should be made by himself. Louis reiterated the sincerity of his intentions with regard to peace, declaring "qu'il n'avoit pas rendu vingt des plus fortes places de l'Europe pour ne pas avoir cette paix, ce que c'estoit une preuve assez forte pour convaincre tout le monde de son intention." Portland while again asseverating his master's sincere desire for peace and implicit reliance on Louis XIV.'s assurances, once more took the opportunity of begging Louis to have some regard to the remonstrances that he had made to him on divers points, so as to remove any doubts that might arise. (This referred, of course, to the presence of James II. at Versailles, and more particularly of the assassins. The Duke of Berwick especially had been loudly expressing his resentment at such a designation.) Portland added, that his master was entirely disposed to enter into all measures that could be taken to make peace secure, and that he waited impatiently for Louis to make some more detailed proposals.

[1] See Portland to Shrewsbury, January 17 (27), 1698, on his accepting the post of Lord Chamberlain. He finally retired in 1700. Coxe.

[2] Portland to William, March 26.

"Plus que j'y songe plus je souhaitertois que l'on peu trouver des expedients pour prévenir une guerre que me paroit si prochaine," wrote the King from Windsor on March 19 (29). How could a tired and ailing man once more rally the forces of Europe to action, and wring from Parliament the means of paying for them?

After he had received Portland's letter William wrote again from Windsor, April 1 (March 20):

"I hope that after what the Most Christian King has said, they will explain themselves more particularly, since reason also demands that it is they from whom the first proposal should come to let us know with what they would be content, and make us an offer that would give us security. What is most difficult, is to secure our commerce in the Mediterranean, and whether they would make some partition with us in the Indies, or at least allow us to negotiate about it. With regard to the Netherlands, it is absolutely necessary that the barrier should be more extended, at least hardly less than on the footing of the Treaty of the Pyrenees, except the Franche Compté. . . . If I could have Duynkirke then I think perhaps we could come to terms. . . . I know the French well enough that without our speaking they will not speak either, and I have difficulty in believing that they will enter into greater detail with you than they have already done."

The King adds that he is giving Count Tallard a private audience at Kensington in a few days, and expresses a doubt as to whether Tallard will speak on the affair; but he himself certainly will not do so till he hears what proposals the French ministers have made to Portland. Then with one of those sudden changes of subject, he continues: "I hunt hares every day in the Park with your hounds and mine, and I have had some good runs; the rabbits are nearly all destroyed, and their holes will be soon stopped up." Stag hunting with the Prince of Denmark's hounds: "I had as pretty a run as this villainous country affords."

Meanwhile Portland had had an interview with Pomponne and Torcy of which he wrote an account on April 2.

It is very long, but in brief the French Ministers made three proposals :

(1) That Louis, having considered the jealousy which might be felt by the King of England and the nations at the Union of France and Spain, was prepared, in spite of the Dauphin's incontestible rights, to allow Spain to choose between the Dukes of Anjou and Berri.

(2) He would cede the Netherlands to the Elector of Bavaria, as they were possessed by Spain, as a barrier.

(3) He would make such a treaty for the security of Dutch and English commerce as should be desired.

Portland requested them to put these proposals in writing, at the same time expressing his surprise at their tenour. When they sought to enforce them by arguments, he replied that he had no orders except to report their views, but from the manner in which he believed his master regarded the question, he did not see that the junction of Spain and the Empire was as much to be feared as that of Spain and France ; that the Archduke Charles as King of Spain would have no more attachment to his brother the Emperor, than a Duke of Anjou or Berri for his brother the King of France. That apart from either of these two considerations it might be shown that the Electoral Prince had more right than either, and he would have no predilections for the one or the other, but would follow his own interests and those of the monarchy. With regard to their second point, that of the Spanish Netherlands, to leave them to the Elector for a barrier as Spain possessed them, which was only a pierced barrier, would give no security.

As for trade, that of the Mediterranean would be entirely jeopardised whenever a French King of Spain chose. Gibraltar was mentioned as a fortress of which the English and Dutch ought to be masters, as a security for their Indian trade. " Whereupon," says Portland, " they replied to me several things which meant nothing, which would be too long to be reported."

Finally the Ministers told Portland that the King considered him to be too well instructed in the affair for it to be necessary to put anything in writing.

In his reply to this letter, March 28 (April 7), the King entered more into detail. He expressed his view that an increased barrier in the Netherlands was absolutely

necessary ; that for the security of Mediterranean commerce it was necessary to have some ports on the coast of Barbary like Ceuta or Oran, as well as on the coast of Spain, like Mahon in Minorca, as well as a port in the Indies. To give some satisfaction to the Emperor it was necessary that France should cede to him all the Spanish possessions in Italy. Most difficult point in the whole affair, the King adds, is to know how far any renunciation or promise on the part of France can be relied upon. The Pensionary Heinsius believed, rightly as future events proved, that accommodation with France was impossible ; that the King of Spain was dying ; and war was inevitable. So far William had said nothing to his English Ministers about the negotiations pending in France. In an illuminating letter to Heinsius he says that if a war were to result he must take his measures so as to involve this nation insensibly in it, and he acquaints him with devices for augmenting the navy and retaining regiments.[1]

Meanwhile Tallard had had two private audiences with William. The first of these was purely complimentary. On April 1 (11) the King wrote from Kensington to give Portland an account of the second. Tallard had recapitulated all the points discussed with the Ambassador and the French Ministers at Paris, and William had restated the three points mentioned in his letter of March 28 (April 7). Without agreement on these he saw no prospect of a settlement. Meanwhile Portland had been to see the Prince de Vaudemont, travelling as far as Nôtre-Dame de Liesse near Laon to intercept him on his way from the Netherlands to Milan, a journey " qui donna fort à penser," says St. Simon.

It is interesting to read Tallard's report to the King of France on his impressions of England. He says that Albemarle, who was already known in France as " a young man of great insolence and dissipation," was " rising every day in favour of the King his master, dines with him in private once or twice a week." [2] Tallard gives it as his opinion that England would be " destitute of resources for many years to come." The payment of troops was in arrears, but even if the money could be found to pay off and disband them, " The King of England may still be

[1] Heinsius, March 29 (April 8).
[2] Grimblot, 323, 343.

reckoned of much importance, on account of his personal qualities."

Tallard displayed great astuteness in grasping the complex situation in England. He notes the cabals against the King, but adds that "those persons, who are opposed to his will, are not opposed to his government," and observed the patient and consummate dexterity by which William achieved, if not all, at least a part of his own way. The Earl of Portland was especially insupportable to the English, but Albemarle too, with rising favour, was becoming disliked. He mentions that William had a tumour in one knee, and that his leg was frequently so swelled on his return from hunting that he had to be carried up the steps of the palace. The King himself was well aware of his failing physical powers. In a long interview with Tallard on April 9 he exclaimed, "I am old and worn out; I should be very glad to enjoy repose," and then as though suddenly weary of beating about the bush, told Tallard that he believed the Electoral Prince to be the "most acceptable to all Europe," and on Tallard's exclaiming incredulously, the King rejoined that he would now speak "to M. Tallard and not to a man bearing an official character," and briefly stated the proposals he apparently considered as the minimum that Louis would be likely to accept.[1] Writing to Heinsius afterwards William remarked that he did not think the French would at all relish this conversation; he did not think they would make any counter proposals. He regarded the negotiations as nearly at an end. It is fortunate, he added, that we have no further engagement with the Emperor with regard to the Succession, and that it is questionable whether the Grand Alliance subsists or not.

Portland in Paris had returned from his visit to de Vaudemont. He wrote on April 16. He had not received any account from William of his interview with Tallard, and had rather disconcertingly learned its gist from Louis XIV. The negotiations were really advanced no further on this occasion.

William believed that in case of war the English would

[1] *I.e.* (1) A son of the Dauphin to have Spain and the Indies. (2) Elector of Bavaria to have the Netherlands with a reasonable barrier. (3) The Archduke Charles to have Naples and the Milanese. (4) A Treaty of Commerce with Holland and England, with the cession of some places in the Mediterranean.

contribute little or nothing except to the navy, abandoning the land campaign to Holland and the Allies.[1] Writing from Newmarket, April 6 (16), he expressed his opinion that the negotiations were nearly at an end, and the suggestions he had made would not be acceptable to the French. At this point Tallard was approached by a Frenchman who offered to assassinate William. He at once sent to the King at Newmarket to acquaint him with the circumstances; for this his master censured him. Louis, so accustomed to tortuous dealings, could not comprehend that Tallard's straightforward action was the best policy. Moreover, with Portland's reproaches on the ground of the assassins at the French Court fresh in his memory, he felt that his Ambassador's too great eagerness to make the matter public looked like disclaiming a complicity which should have been regarded as inconceivable.[2] At the same time the French King, much to William's surprise, had actually agreed to consider the proposals made by him and offered the King of England a choice. Tallard was commissioned to propose:

(1) That the Electoral Prince should receive Spain, the Indies, and the rest of the Spanish Inheritance except:

(2) The two Sicilies and Luxemburg to go to the Dauphin.

(3) The Archduke Charles to have Milan. Or

(1) The whole of the Spanish inheritance to go to one of the Dauphin's sons.

(2) Except: The Electoral Prince to have the Low Countries;

(3) The Archduke Charles to have the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily.

(4) The Milanese to go to the Duke of Savoy.

Louis remarked incidentally that the King of England explained his views much more frankly than his Ambassador Portland could be got to do. That gentleman had attended the King's Levée, he wrote on April 20, and had afterwards had a long private conversation with him in his Cabinet, in which Louis acquainted him with the alternative proposals made to William by Tallard. Portland objected that there were no provisions for safeguarding the trade of England and Holland. He also asked permission to return to England. To which the King replied, "That he

[1] Heinsius, April 1 (11).
[2] Grimblot, 386. Louis XIV. to Tallard, April 17.

wished I could remain longer, that there had never been an Ambassador here for whom he had had a more particular esteem." In this interview Louis, in pursuance of the attitude adopted by William to Tallard, assumed airs of friendly intimacy, so that even the austere Portland was not insensible to the delicate flattery of the arch diplomatist. He received permission to request his recall "les affaires estant dans ce train."

"I had forgotten to tell your Majesty," adds Portland to William, "that they have consented to the entire restitution of your Estates.[1] I am in rather a difficulty about the furniture that your Majesty wishes that I should have made for Dieren, because I am sure that the fashion of the beds as they are made here will not please you, not approaching those that are made in England, and being at the same time very costly."

A huntsman had been engaged with all possible precautions. "He is well known and has a good character. I have engaged him on such a footing that we shall be able to keep him in his place, and that he will not be able to give himself out for a gentleman." He had a very good whipper-in who was also engaged. On his return home, having hunted and supped with the Dauphin at Meudon, Portland found a message from M. le Grand. M. le Grand, who had already been mentioned as keeping a good pack of English hounds, was Louis de Lorraine. He held the office of Grand Ecuyer de France and went by the title of M. le Grand. He now suggested that one of Portland's horses would be not inacceptable to the King. Portland begged him to mount them all and select the one he preferred for the King's stables. In return he received from the King's stud a barb from Algiers. "Il est beau, grand, et de plus forts que j'ai jamais vû, et jeune, il sera trés bon pour en tirer race. If your Majesty would like me to send him to you I will do so."

This letter crossed one of William's of the same date,[2] in which he expressed his approval at what had been done in the Orange affair, and adds :

[1] The Orange Estates.
[2] Kensington, April 10 (20).

"Be assured that it is impossible to be more impatient to see you than I am. I have hardly amused myself at all since I have been here, the weather has been bad and I am none too well, having no appetite and very languid."

About this date Portland was approached by an informer, who promised to disclose a dangerous treason against the King of England. He disappeared and nothing came of it, but at the same time another Jacobite spy whom Portland was attempting to buy over was assassinated in the street. There was also the affair of Tallard's assassin; and on Sunday, April 3, two loaded pistols were found in St. James's Chapel, where the King had attended service accompanied by the Princess Anne, and it was noticed that two strange-looking men were seated among the ladies, contrary to the usual custom.[1] Nothing came of any of these disquieting occurrences. Other plots, real or bogus, against the King's life had been so frequently discovered through the watchfulness of his friends, or the treachery of his enemies, that he could afford to disregard them.

The King at once put his finger on the weak points of Louis XIV.'s proposals. Louis feared especially letting England and Holland get a footing in the Indies, lest they should absorb all the commerce of the New World. The extension of the barrier in the Netherlands was incompatible with the accomplishment of Louis XIV.'s twofold design of obliterating the Pyrenees from the map of Europe and extending his kingdom to the Rhine on the north.

Tallard followed the King to Newmarket, where he again discussed the alternative proposals, and William wrote an account of the conversation to Bentinck, April 14 (24). He had pointed out to Tallard that in the alternative of Spain's going to the son of the Dauphin there was no means proposed "of securing our commerce in the Mediterranean and the Indies." Tallard talked vaguely of expedients being found. He did not for a moment entertain the suggestion of the cession of Dunkirk "rejetta la chose comme si je me moquais de luy," and held out no hopes that his master would strengthen the barrier in the Low Countries, at that moment regarded by William as an

[1] Luttrell, iv. 363.

insuperable difficulty, but when the King said it was "une raillerie" to cede the Milanese to Savoy, Tallard gave it as a reason that the Emperor might not be too powerful in Italy.[1]

"I confess that I am surprised at the offers that France makes and that they are so open at this juncture. You can believe that I am not a little embarrassed since we can never make the Emperor consent to either alternative."

In conclusion the King indicates the weak points of both alternatives. It would be best for Europe in general that the Electoral Prince should have Spain, but in that case England and Holland could not expect any particular advantage, such as ports in the Mediterranean and the Indies. Besides this, the retention of Luxemburg by France would so further weaken the barrier that William thought this alternative had only been named by France to induce his acceptance of the other, which was certainly much more advantageous to the Emperor.

"I do not know whether there is much to choose between having a son of France King of Spain and the Indies, or the son of the Elector of Bavaria; if they would leave him the Duchy of Luxemburg I should not hesitate in choosing this alternative, but I fear that this is not to be obtained. You will receive by this courier your formal leave to return. You may take your Audience de Congé as soon as you can, and return to me, where you will assuredly be received with open arms, being impossible to be more satisfied than I am with your conduct. . . . I should like you to bring the huntsman to England with you, and that you should first send the barbary horse home to get foals. He will always remain yours." [2]

Lord Portland continued to be occupied with all sorts of festivities in the intervals of business. He describes one such in his next letter to the King, dated April 25, when he had dined with Monsieur at St. Cloud.

[1] The Duke of Savoy who had betrayed the Allies.

[2] It is interesting to compare this letter with that on the same subject to Heinsius, 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 126, April 13 (23).

" He gave us a grand dinner after which we walked on foot in the neighbourhood of the house." Portland, Monsieur, and " some ladies then drove in an open Calêche round the park and more remote gardens. Your Majesty would be pleased with the situation, the beautiful natural waters, the fine views and the great variety that there is in the place. Your Majesty tells me that your appetite fails and that you are languid ; that will soon pass, you have been like that once already since I have been here. May the good God preserve you, and grant you a continuance of your health."

There is a note of tenderness here that marked the earlier letters, but how William must have wished his correspondent could have satisfied his eager curiosity with details of contemporary gossip. He himself is a much better correspondent, his news tumbles out, often quite without method. How he would have liked to know the names of the other guests ! The entertainment was of more than ordinary magnificence. It was served in the ancient salon of St. Cloud. Lord Portland sat next to the Duc de Chartres, who was on the right hand of Monsieur, with Mademoiselle de Montauban on his left and young Lord Woodstock beyond her. One would have liked to know of what the dinner consisted, but we are only told that " l'abondance et la délicatesse " were united, and that everything the season produced was to be seen even prematurely—everything in and out of season, in short. The table was decorated by a new invention, such as we should now call a " dumb waiter," a " milieu de table " of " vermeil doré," in several tiers, to hold all kinds of things used at table. After dinner a number of carriages and six were in waiting to take the guests round the grounds.[1]

When the King wrote again, April 22 (May 2), he had nothing further to say on the subject of the business in hand as he was waiting to hear from both Portland and Heinsius, but he sends him much current news. Lord Jersey is to succeed him in Paris, and he adds, " my impatience to see you increases more and more." Shrewsbury had excused himself from serving the King on the grounds of his health, he was still spitting blood :

[1] Dangeau, vi. 334.

" but everyone believes he was unwilling to engage himself because I did not wish my Lord Wharton to have the seals. . . . Now they urge me to make Lord Wharton Lord Chamberlain, for which I have as little inclination as for making him Secretary of State. The Wiggs maintain that they will not be satisfied, nor my business in Parliament accomplished to my satisfaction if I do not content him. . . . Now that the King of Spain is a little better they assume that there is no longer anything to apprehend, and I much fear that I shall have some address for completing the disbanding of the troops without any consideration that France is not doing so and the naval preparations that she is making. . . . I cannot find here any fine damask for the furniture, if you can find any at Paris, have it bought as well as some fine ' brocade or brocatelle,' as it is called, then I will have the furniture made here or in Holland. If you can find any pretty hunting sword please bring it."

On May 4 Lord Portland sent an account of an interview he had had with Torcy and Pomponne in which he had again " insisted absolutely " on increasing the barrier, and also on the Ports in the Mediterranean and the Indies. They told him that the principal objection King William had raised was on the proposal to give the Milanese to the Duke of Savoy. " I told them that your Highness had laughed at that proposition which could only have been made as a form, or in order that this Duke should cede Savoy to France." On this occasion Bentinck pointed out that in accordance with the wishes of their King he had dropped the subject of the residence of James II. in France and of the assassins. But Torcy, afterwards dining with the Ambassador, told him that Louis XIV. had received very well what he had said about the assassins, and if Lord Portland could discover that there were any of these rascals in France, he would have them arrested on his request. The faithful Bentinck talked long and forcibly to them on this point and of the impossibility of establishing confidence and understanding as long as they took no action, saying that :

" Your Majesty could not consent yourself with outward

show alone nor with the kind reception that they give me, which is in fact more distinguished every day.

"During my stay at Versailles the King showed me a thousand civilities. At his 'coucher' he gave me the candlestick,[1] he himself showed me the gardens and fountains, walking about all the evening, and he has never seen me, although sometimes three times a day, without speaking to me and conversing gaily about all sorts of things. Your Majesty knows this nation sufficiently well to judge after this how the whole Court behaves, where I can say without flattery your Majesty is more generally esteemed, honoured and respected than in your own countries, and particularly by all distinguished persons beyond what I can express."

There was, he notes, the exception of the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, who had avoided ever asking him to hunt with the King's staghounds.

Bentinck goes on to remind the King that he has not mentioned Gibraltar, and it is very important to insist upon it, because the Indies in the hands of a French King of Spain was so very important that they would do anything to attain it.

The little barb has been sent, as well as "the Spanish horse which your Majesty had given to the Prince de Vaudemont, and which he has sent back from Milan."

"I have told Mr. Prior of your intention that he should remain here until the arrival of your successor, and he begs me to represent that he has only £2 a day, and that living is so expensive here it is impossible for him to subsist honourably on less than £4 a day."

This commission faithfully carried out by Portland produced no results, for shortly after the Ambassador's departure Prior was writing to Albemarle importunately for an increase in his salary, now that he "could no more have recourse to Milord Portland's table."[2] The Ambassador had been convinced of its necessity and had promised to attend to the matter, but Prior adds, with his characteristic

[1] Both Dangeau (vi. 339, April 29) and St. Simon mention this attention shown by the King to Portland as an extraordinary honour.

[2] See Longleat Papers, iii. 211.

sneer, "one sometimes forgets things in which one is not apparently interested."

Tallard wrote a letter to his master at this time which looks as if he had been consorting with Jacobites. To say that William was "generally hated" by all great men, and the whole of the nobility, was certainly an overstatement of fact. "In this country," he adds, "the Earl of Portland is looked upon as ruined." [1]

The proposals made by William in a subsequent interview with Tallard were, with some modifications, carried into effect by the Peace of Utrecht: Spain and the West Indies for a son of the Dauphin; Milan, Naples and Sicily for the Archduke Charles, the Netherlands with a strengthened barrier for the Electoral Prince. Tallard then thought it superfluous to discuss such a proposal. Fifteen years later, after an immeasurably destructive war, Louis XIV. counted himself far more fortunate than he had dared to hope in seeing this proposal realised in principle.

From the account of the interview which the King gave to Portland it appears that he felt some compunction, which those who have followed his negotiations must have shared, with regard to the Emperor. He was, he said, "much embarrassed about the form" the negotiations should take. Having been so long allied to the Emperor it was not "bien seant" not to communicate them to him beforehand. Tallard replied that they would first agree together before communicating with the Emperor, observing secrecy meanwhile; an obvious impossibility, as William pointed out to him.

On the whole the differences were whittled down. The King noticed that Tallard seemed terribly anxious to end the negotiation, so:

"I let fall as if by chance that if I came to an agreement with France on this important affair I should be detached from the House of Austria. I never saw a man in such joy, hardly able to contain himself, repeating it four or five times. I have forgotten to tell you that at our first conversation I had spoken of the removal of King James, and

[1] Grimblot, i. 466.

how it was impossible that the Most Christian King and myself could ever maintain a close understanding as long as he was in France. . . . As for the Assassins, I did not wish to speak of them, thinking it beneath me."

There is abundant evidence that William was uneasy at the part he was playing towards the Emperor. To be disingenuous towards an old ally was foreign to his practice.

Later when the alarming news of Charles II. of Spain's illness reached London, and Auersperg sought to obtain from William some definite pronouncement, he insisted, while admitting the danger and professing his readiness to support the Emperor, that as long as his war with the Turks continued there was no chance of withstanding the power of France. Is it too much to say that, if the Emperor could have concluded peace with the Turks, rallied all his forces of men and money to lead a united Empire against the armies of France in support of his inheritance, William would then have thrown the weight of his influence and all that it implied on to the side of Austria? Then at least he would, according to Auersperg, have had the wholehearted support of England.

On May 17 Bentinck wrote again. He had been to Versailles and seen Louis XIV. at his levée, when the Ambassador had been given an account of William's last conversation with Tallard. This conversation was little more than a recapitulation of the stage already reached in the negotiations. "I told him that it would be useless to talk of the Restitution of Luxemburg, or of not reinforcing the barrier, that it was necessary that these countries should be put in a position to subsist of themselves." Louis told Portland, he says, "Que vostre Majesté avoit fait des railleries sur la proposition touchant le Milanais pour M. le duc de Savoy," "and that you had, Sire, expressed your astonishment at his interesting himself on behalf of this duke since certainly on the first opportunity he would again kick over the traces, at which the King laughed very heartily." Louis had repeated several times, "Si nous nous entendons bien, le Roy d'Angleterre et moy le reste de l'Europe suivra nos sentiments," and Portland

[1] For Bentinck's Audience de Congé, see Dangeau.

concludes this part of his letter by an adjuration to his master to maintain an unyielding attitude. "Je suis très persuadé Sire que vostre majesté tenant très ferme sur toutes les choses en question, elle aura consentement sur la plupart, sinon tout."

Some time would still have to elapse before the Ambassador could return home. Even after his farewell audience he had the fatiguing prospect of taking leave of twenty princes and princesses, exchanging visits with the Ministers, and bidding farewell to the most important people, which would take more than eight days. He had visited Fontainebleau, "a place beautiful by nature, which would much please your Majesty. It is very well situated for hunting, the rocks are naturally difficult, but they have made so many roads that one can follow the hounds everywhere."

William Bentinck was certainly a most disappointing person to entrust with shopping commissions. Here he is again recurring to the subject of the furniture. The matter should have been entrusted to Prior. One can fancy it would have amused him, and that he would have somehow secured a commission on the negotiation. Portland is in difficulties about the damask, there is none fine, or really Italian, nothing at all of two colours, and yet it is dearer than in England or Holland. "Your Majesty would do better to buy it in England." The fashion in beds, he repeats, he does not like and they certainly would not be to the King's taste. Finally he will not buy anything unless he sees something more beautiful. He has seen no fine "Brocatels" nor flowered stuffs for furniture, but when his hands are freer he will search again. He adds to his default some perfectly irrelevant observation about the weather, "which here continues very cold and showery, a more villainous spring has never been seen."

In reply the King wrote, Kensington, May 12 (22), to say that in his last interview Tallard had suggested a third division of the Spanish Inheritance, which was rejected by him as the least advantageous of the three,[1] and with regard to the two others he persisted in what he had said at the

[1] The Emperor to have the Low Countries, Naples and Sicily; the son of the Elector of Bavaria the Milanese, and the son of the Dauphin, Spain and the Indies. William told him that this was the most disadvantageous of the three, that it would by no means suit him to have the Emperor for a neighbour.

last interview.[1] The greatest difficulty was Luxemburg, which was "absolutely necessary to us." The King added that James II. remaining at St. Germains was "an absolute contradiction" to a perfect union.

"I am always persuaded that if we agree as to the Spanish Succession this question will settle itself. As to the purchases, you must do as you think best. I do not know whether beautiful tapestries are still made at Goblin. I pine for your return more than you can think, loving you tenderly as I do."

A few days later, May 25 (June 4), the King wrote from Kensington:

"I hope to see you in a little while. You cannot believe the impatience that I have for it, and how much I feel that it is impossible for me to endure longer an absence of nearly five months. If you could look into the bottom of my heart you would be as entirely satisfied with your conduct as I am."

It is difficult to reconcile these expressions of deep and unwavering affection with the general impression in England that Albemarle had usurped Bentinck's place with the King. The younger man seems to have gained an ascendancy over the King by a kind of audacious assiduity, and by pandering to the King's weaknesses; his love of good wine and good living. It was much remarked upon that he dined with Albemarle two or three times a week, sometimes sitting for hours together over the meal.

When Bentinck wrote again on June 4 he reported a conversation with Louis XIV., who told him that he had been studying the map of the Indies since this question was on the *tapis*, and now proposed to give them S. Domingo, a proposition which Bentinck declined, as it was not fortified and of no use, and Cuba was separated from the mainland. Louis objected that whoever was master of Havannah was master also of the Gulf of Mexico, and could obstruct

[1] He had least difficulty in agreeing to the alternative by which Spain, the Indies and the Low Countries should go to the Elector of Bavaria's son.

at will the commerce of the waters of the Indies; in the same way the possession of Port Mahon gave control of the commerce of the Mediterranean. Another awkward incident had arisen with regard to James—"There will be to-morrow a review of the bodyguard and musketeers, that I should very much like to see, but as King James will be there I dare not go there." [1] Villeroy had afterwards come to see Portland and to say that Louis very much wished him to see his Guards. Portland excused himself, not out of consideration for King James, as he was careful to explain, but from respect to Louis XIV.

"I sent my son to the review with orders not to approach King James, or the Queen, or the English members of their suite if he knew them, but everyone remarked that both one and the other showed him distinguished attention in saluting him even from far. The day before yesterday I received the King's present, which is very beautiful. It is his portrait set with diamonds, I do not yet know what it cost, nor what it will be valued at in Court talk, but the jeweller to whom I showed it estimates its value at 32 or 33 thousand crowns. The day after to-morrow I shall put an end to my great expenses in order to have my baggage packed up and everything put ready to leave at the same time as myself. 'Restant dans l'espérance d'avoir bientost le bonheur de me rendre à mon devoir auprès de vostre Majesté. Je reste à elle avec tout le respect et le passion possible.'"

The next letter, June 17, completes the series written from Paris by Portland and gives the itinerary he proposed to follow on his return journey. At his farewell audience with Louis he asked leave to visit Dunkerque, and the French King replied with charming courtesy that he would

"pass by several other fine places in Flanders, which were worth seeing, and that I should not turn aside eight leagues to pass by ten places that he wishes I should see. Then he

[1] See for Review, Kennet and Dangeau, June 6.

made me a route by Cambray, Bouchain, Valenciennes, Condé, Tournay, Lille, Ypres, Dunkirk and Calais."

What passed at this interview, said the Ambassador, was of too private a nature to be committed to paper.

The next day Portland was to start on his return journey, visiting first the Prince de Condé at Chantilly. "M. le Prince," as he was called, Henri Jules de Bourbon was a son of the great Condé. One of his three daughters had been married by Madame de Maintenon's influence to her nurse child, the Duc de Maine, the illegitimate son of Louis XIV. by Madame de Montespan.[1] The visit is chronicled by St. Simon, who declares it was celebrated with the exquisite taste peculiar to the Condés in this kind of thing. He adds that in the subsequent journey Lord Portland was received everywhere with the greatest honour. Dangeau gives the same account of the visit and subsequent journey.

"Lord Portland has remained three days at Chantilly, where M. le Prince received him and entertained him magnificently. He leaves on Saturday and goes to see several of our places in Flanders, where the King has given orders that many honours should be shown him. They will fire salutes everywhere, and will give him a guard with a captain; engineers are charged to show him all the fortifications, and at the end of the week he will embark at Calais. The King has sent him his portrait in a diamond box worth quite 4000 pistoles." [2]

If Portland sent any account of his journey to the King, it has not survived. On June 10 Narcissus Luttrell writes that "The Earl of Portland is hourly expected here," and adds later that "Lord Portland has left Mr. Secretary Pryor and M. D'Alone at Paris to manage affairs there till the arrival of the Earl of Jersey," but he does not mention his return, only a rumour that he was to be made "Duke of Bucks," the title ultimately conferred upon the Princess Anne's former favourite, John Sheffield.

[1] See St. Simon for the account of this curious contract.
[2] Dangeau, vi., June 25, 1698.

Prior himself throws some light on the Ambassador's return. He writes, July 3 (N.S.):

"The messenger that brought the last letters tells me he saw your Excellency under sail, so I hope this will find you after your having been some days at Kensington, and tired with the congratulations of those who are glad to see you safe returned. . . . The Marshal de Villeroy was in town on Sunday; he told me he had letters from your Excellency from the frontiers; and gave me to understand how well you had been treated wherever you came, which was all so truly French that I could hardly forbear laughing; he stopped his coach to tell me this in the Cours de la Reine, and made a hundred other coaches stop likewise, whilst he talked with me. This your Lordship knows is so like the man that I cannot forbear telling it to you."

Portland's secretary, van Leeuwen, had written to Prior from the "*Catherine* Yacht," between Calais and Dover.

"June 29 (July 9). His Excellency came last night at 9 to Calais, and went on board this morning at 6 with very fine weather, but little wind. We hope to be on shore at Dover by two in the afternoon.

"P.S.—Dover 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Just now his Excellency is landed [1] and goes this evening to Canterbury and will be to-morrow night at Kensington."

Van Leeuwen wrote later to Prior: "Lord Portland desires you will send his picture over as soon as it is finished and that care may be taken that it is not damnified in any way."

His Excellency was evidently much entertained by Prior's account of Villeroy, and replied:

". . . Je vous envoyeray par My Lord Jersey une boutcille de Thé pour Madame la Duchesse de Lude, et

[1] A crossing, under favouring circumstances, of ten hours!

une autre pour vous, pour vous dédomager pour celuy que vous luy avez donné. Je vous prie de faire bien des compliments à mes amis, et particulièrement au Marèchal de Villeroy dont j'attends des nouvelles avec impatience."

Did the star of Albemarle pale before the return of the Ambassador "comblé de toutes les manières possibles," as St. Simon says ? Perhaps hidden away in some forgotten library drawer or cupboard a manuscript, letters or diaries reflect the gossip of the moment. As it is we can only conjecture ; for nearly a year passes before the correspondence of Bentinck and the King is resumed.

CHAPTER XII

1698–1702

FIRST AND SECOND PARTITION TREATIES—IMPEACHMENT OF PORTLAND—DEATH OF WILLIAM III.

Concerning Lord Portland's return contemporary records are almost silent. He was warmly received by the King, as Auersperg testifies, and having so much to communicate of an important and private nature, he must have been closeted with his master to the exclusion of his rival. It is obvious from contemporary letters that the Court was now a hotbed of intrigue, personal and political, and that in the general opinion Albemarle's influence was in the ascendant and that Portland's star was waning. Portland himself was not the man to play his cards judiciously, or to dissimulate his anger at finding Albemarle in the ascendant, despite all his own remonstrances and the King's passionate asseverations. The returned Ambassador, welcomed home by his master after strenuous and faithful service, found that the one thing he had asked had not been done. As Burnet says :

" Upon his return, he could not bear the visible superiority in favour that the other was grown up to ; so he took occasion, from a small preference that was given him, in favour of his own post, as Groom of the Stole, and upon it withdrew from the Court, and laid down all his employments. The King used all possible means to divert him from this resolution, but without prevailing on him ; he consented to serve the King still in his affairs, but he would not return to any post in the household ; and not long after that he was employed in the new negotiation set on foot for the succession to the Crown of Spain."

This statement is only partially true. Bentinck did not resign his posts for another year, and his part in the

negotiations was never suspended. How far there was any fresh definite breach between him and the King it is impossible to say in the absence of any testimony from either of the principals. Tallard makes no mention of any rupture, and he could not have failed to hear of it. Vernon [1] observes that a few days after his return Portland was dining with the King at Lord Ranelagh's.

Another question that arises is how much Bentinck had achieved by his mission. In other words, how far was Louis XIV. sincere in the proposals he had made? In one momentous respect William's wishes had not been satisfied. Portland had never been confronted with the power behind the throne. The all-powerful lady who pulled the strings at the French Court had not received him. She never saw foreign Ministers, Portland had told William. "It is prodigious, the power of this old governess on the mind of her royal pupil of sixty," commented Prior. "He dares not do anything without her or refuse her anything she wishes." The fact that the Ambassador had never been admitted to her presence did not escape notice. The astute Somers, writing to Shrewsbury, June 23 (July 3),[2] says sourly:

"My Lord Portland is come back oppressed with civilities, but I do not find that, beyond outward respects, he has brought any outward proofs of the sincerity of the French King's good meaning to ours. This is remarkable, that Madame Maintenon, who governs all absolutely, declined to see him."

It could hardly have been otherwise. Portland was the emissary of the heretic supplanter of the good and pious King James, a martyr to his Religion. Madame de Maintenon was the patroness of James at the Court of St. Germains, an august patronage received by the unhappy Queen Maria Beatrice with something of nervous anxiety. It was not to be expected that she should smile upon Portland. Nevertheless her smiles would have been a most important proof of Louis's integrity.

Tallard at least was convinced of the sincerity of one

[1] Secretary of State with Shrewsbury.

[2] Coxe, 483. Somers had a grudge against Portland over some misunderstanding about a grant from the Crown.

person. The King of England, he thought, would be willing to increase the Dauphin's portion in some particular, but "I do not believe that it would be easy to revert to Spain. The Dutch have made him resolute not to consent to that alternative. He is honourable in all he does. His conduct is sincere." [1]

Louis seems to have felt that Portland would only stiffen his master's back in resisting fresh encroachments. "I do not believe that the Earl of Portland will facilitate the conclusion," he wrote to Tallard, "as he must have arrived by this time, you will remind him that I should disavow everything that might transpire in public respecting proposals which have been made." [2] Tallard replied that he had spoken to Portland. "I believe your Majesty is not mistaken in believing that he will not facilitate anything. This comes rather from his obstinacy, and from what your Majesty knows better than I do, than from ill will." Louis meanwhile thought, from a fresh attack of illness which overcame the unfortunate King of Spain, that it would be well to protract the negotiations by marking time, as he could easily send an army into Spain to support his son's claims long before any allied troops could be on the spot. Tallard had warned him three days earlier, "I must venture to observe to your Majesty that the King of England is very sharpsighted, and has a correct judgment, and will soon perceive that we are trifling with him if we protract matters too much."

One piece of news with which Tallard acquainted his master must have still further inflamed Portland's resentment. "The King," he wrote, "has purchased the seat of Lord Cardigan for 12,000 guineas to give it to the Earl of Albemarle."

Another fact which pointed to a lack of sincerity on the part of Louis was his persistent retention of the English Royal Family at St. Germains. The question of their retiring to Avignon was again raised, and Louis advanced the ingenious theory that William's surest safety lay in their retention at St. Germains, where he would be in a position to check any proposed enterprise against England. Of

[1] Grimblot, ii. 48. Tallard, July 3.

[2] Grimblot, ii. 53. Louis to Tallard, July 4. In order not to offend Spanish pride, Louis was anxious they should not know that partition was being talked of, as it would spoil his grandson's chances.

these two proofs of the French King's insincerity William was in a position to judge, but it seems clear that at this point his judgment erred partly through lack of information. He neglected to inform himself closely of what was taking place. Heinsius could speak with intimate and sure knowledge for Holland, but Bentinck had been a little dazzled by the distinguished courtesy and personal charm of Louis XIV.

Lastly, William neglected to keep himself sufficiently closely informed of what was taking place in Spain. While Louis XIV. was professing to Portland that a firm alliance between himself and William would enable them to dictate terms to Europe, his Ambassador, Harcourt, in Madrid, was saying to the elder Harrach just before his retirement that if only the Emperor and the King of France could come to an understanding they could dictate laws to the whole world.

Auersperg, who, it seems, could not bring himself to mistrust William's good faith, on several occasions during the spring and summer of this year, urged him to draw closer his relations with the Emperor, and to come to an understanding about Spain; and to use his influence with the Elector of Bavaria to the same end. In extenuation of William's disingenuous dealings with the Emperor, to call them by no more harsh a name, it must be remembered that while the war with the Turks continued the Emperor could render no effective help, but the burden of war would fall on England and Holland. Holland's interests were now, as ever, the whole end of his policy. This Treaty was made in her interests. To sum up the position, William wanted peace at almost any cost. Louis wanted the Spanish Inheritance for his grandson, if possible without war, but if not, with it.

Prior continued to keep Lord Portland informed of what was happening in Paris after his departure. He has learned through "a repentant Jacobite" that King James had said

"that their killing the Prince of Orange (as these people call His Majesty) at Richmond or Kensington was the same as if Villeroy had laid an ambuscade for him in Flanders and that he, King James, had the opinion of the best doctors [Jesuits] upon the point; you see, my Lord, that the old gentleman is a very excellent casuist." [1]

Prior, at this point still assiduous, writes to Portland to

[1] Longleat Papers, Hist. MSS. Com. Report.

hope he is safely arrived in Holland, "where I wish your Lordship all sorts of happiness and satisfaction." On August 15 Prior is enclosing patterns (for William's furniture ?), and on the same day he writes to Albemarle: "J'écris régulièrement à mon mâitre Portland mais je ne reçois que fort rarement de ses faveurs." Prior appealed to Portland to fix his allowance at £4 a day, "or I am quite ruined and bankrupt, and yet I have not been extravagant, but your Excellency knows Paris, or will do, when you see your own accounts." On August 27 the impecunious secretary is lamenting that he has had no answer to this appeal.

Sometimes the ex-Ambassador sardonically rebukes the levity of his correspondent, as when he boasts of having exaggerated the English military resources: "You have answered your 'Governor' Villeroy very well, Sir, but if you boast too much and they have intelligence to the contrary, they will no more believe you."

Prior describes a christening ceremony of the daughter of the Duc de Chartres to which he had been at St. Cloud:

"King James and his Queen were there, and as most of the Ministers went thither from Versailles I went likewise (pray do not hang me for so doing), and there was nothing so odd as to see the Duke of Berwick and Lord Middleton in the gallery on one side, and I and Lord Reay on the other side, each looking on the other with an air of civility mixed with contempt. The gentlemen belonging to the Duc d'Orléans and Chartres were embarrassed enough to call him one moment 'le Roy d'Angleterre' to them, and speak to me the next of 'le Roy Jacques'; it was, as most human things are, a farce ridiculous enough. King James looks mighty old and worn and stoops in his shoulders, the Queen looks ill and melancholy, their equipage is mighty ragged, and their horses are as lean as Sancho's." [1]

This description was much appreciated by His Excellency who replied from Loo, September 5 (15):

"I don't know whether you run the risk of losing your life for having seen King James, but although I laughed with all my heart at your account, it is the stupidest thing in the

[1] Longleat Papers, 257.

world to be obliged to change one's tone and style between one end of a room and the other."

The success of Prior's flight of fancy is marked by what follows from Portland:

"I have spoken to the King concerning the time that you should have the increase in your salary; his Majesty grants it from the time of your departure, but he does not wish that it should be known because of the consequence for others."

Portland had accompanied the King to Holland in the middle of July to continue the negotiations. They sailed on the 19th, and the object of their going was generally attributed to a forthcoming Congress of the Allies.[1] The royal visit to Holland was regarded with strong disfavour in England, where the King's subjects resented his obvious relief at escaping from their hostile atmosphere to his native sea breezes and congenial surroundings.

"The King of England," Tallard reported, "left London yesterday, and embarked at Margate this morning. His countenance was expressive of the joy which he felt at going to Holland: he took no pains whatever to conceal it from the English."

The details of the negotiations which followed need not be recapitulated. On August 10 William summoned Heinsius and Dykvelt from the Hague to Loo. Portland continued to take an active part in the discussions with Tallard. On August 24 the negotiations were so far advanced that Portland was commissioned to write to Vernon as follows in terms which suggest that the whole affair was unpremeditated.

"Loo, August 24, 1698.

"SIR,

"While I was in England I often heard Count Tallard say that an accommodation might be found out in relation to the Succession of Spain in case of the King's death.

[1] "This morning," says Luttrell, iv., July 19, 1698, "about 4 the King set forward for Holland attended by the Earls of Portland and Essex, and several of the Nobility. Mr. Blathwayt and the foreign Ambassadors are gone with his Majestie, who it is said will be at a great Congresse of the protestant princes, to consider of the state of Europe in case the King of Spain die."

It is true I heard the same thing talked of while I was in France, and as it is certain that without such an accommodation the accident of this death would infallibly draw us into a cruel war out of which with great difficulty we are but just gotten, his Majesty has sounded France upon what terms an agreement might be made, to which they do not seem averse; and as his Majesty would not enter too deeply into this matter without knowing something of their opinions in England, he has commanded me to impart it to you, and you may speak to my Lord Chancellor about it, to whom the King himself writes by this post, that he would likewise talk about it with those he thinks he may trust with the secret, which it is of the highest importance to keep with the utmost care."

There followed a summary of the treaty, which, reduced to its simplest terms, was based on the proposal of Louis of July 15. By the First Partition Treaty the main part of the Spanish Inheritance, Spain, the Indies, the Netherlands, were to go to the Electoral Prince Joseph of Bavaria. The two Sicilies and Guipuscoa in the North of Spain were to fall to the share of France, Milan to the Archduke Charles.

This bombshell fluttered not a little the small group of Ministers to whom the secret was imparted. Somers was at Tonbridge Wells taking the waters. Wharton had a racing party at his country seat Winchendon, where Shrewsbury, Marlborough, Montague, Lord Orford (Russell) and Godolphin were to meet for the Quarrendon race. The Lord Chancellor Somers at once asked Vernon to acquaint Shrewsbury, Orford and Montague with the substance of Portland's letter. The King's directions were that a Commission was to be immediately dispatched under the Great Seal with a blank for the names of the Commissioners, the whole business to be attended with the greatest secrecy. William was unconscious of the fact that Louis had now allowed rumours of the treaty to disseminate.[1] The Portuguese Ambassador in London had already informed Auersperg of it, and they had both decided that it was incredible. Somers at once put his finger on the weak points of the transaction—"It is to be considered," he wrote to Vernon, "what is to be expected from us towards making good these terms" . .

[1] Klopp, viii. 218. Auersperg to Kinsky, August 8.

" and if the French be not sincere, how far it may turn to our disadvantage." . . . " These are thoughts which occur to a head full with waters, and aching exceedingly." The letter he wrote to William after consultation with the other Whig Ministers was so shrewd and statesmanlike that it is impossible not to regret that the King had not seen his way to reposing more confidence in his wisdom. The English Ministers, while expressing full confidence in the King, evidently had considerable misgivings as to the good faith of France on the one hand, and failed to see what advantage England derived from the treaty on the other.

" If it could be brought to pass," suggests Somers, " and that England might be in some way a gainer by this transaction, whether it was by the Elector of Bavaria . . . coming to an agreement to let us into some trade to the Spanish plantations, or in any other manner, it would wonderfully endear your Majesty to your English subjects."

Somers obeyed the King's orders, the blank commission was sent under the Great Seal. It was signed on behalf of England by Sir Joseph Williamson, Minister at the Hague, and Portland.[1] Meanwhile the secret had leaked out, Spanish pride was inflamed at the idea of arbitrary dismemberment at the hands of other powers. Charles II. was induced to make a will leaving the whole of his dominions to the most favoured candidate, the Electoral Prince.

Soon after the deputies of the States-General had added their signature to the treaty, William was already writing to Heinsius that he had reason to doubt the good faith of France. It is interesting to bear in mind, having regard to the storm of indignation which burst forth later as to the unconstitutional action of Somers, that the treaty of the Grand Alliance of 1689, as well as its renewal in 1695, had been signed by William under the Great Seal

[1] Tallard, writing to Louis XIV. on October 2, says that Portland had desired that another Minister should sign with him. The Ambassador adds later:

" The most celebrated treaty which has been made for many ages was at length signed, the day before yesterday at nine o'clock in the evening at Loo in the usual form. The Earl of Portland signed for the King of England." Macaulay takes the view that William was right to congratulate himself, and that if the King of Spain had died that year as was expected and the Electoral Prince had lived the terms of the First Partition Treaty would have been fulfilled. (Grimblot, ii.)

of England without the signature of any Minister. Moreover William did not even wait for a reply from Somers, but signed the draft of the treaty on September 8, adding a footnote to the effect that it should be converted into a treaty, should the King of Spain's death occur before the exchange of ratifications.[1]

Before returning to England the King paid a visit to Celle, ostensibly to hunt with his old friend Duke George William of Brunswick—Lüneburg zu Celle, to give him his full title. Tallard tried to find out the object of this journey, which he regarded as being undertaken to make the English think he had important motives for crossing the sea, and conferring with the Princes of Germany. He said as much to Lord Portland, "who could not help laughing," as though at the penetration of the Ambassador. Actually this visit was made the occasion of a meeting between William and the Electress Sophia of Hanover, the Protestant heir apparent to the throne of England if the frail life of Anne's son, the little Duke of Gloucester, failed.

The King did not return to England till late in November. Rumours of a quarrel between Portland and Albemarle preceded him. At Portland's request d'Allonne had been made Secretary of Dutch Affairs, an office which had been executed for some time by Albemarle. Rumours of d'Allonne's appointment had alarmed Huygens some years before.[2] The appointment seems to have excited general surprise and to have been interpreted as a sign of Portland's return to favour, and reconciliation with William. Albemarle was so obviously in the wrong that he received a reprimand from the King, retired from Court and sulked for a fortnight. On his return the King would not see him. Tallard adds: "It is assuredly a striking proof that the Earl of Portland gets the upper hand; the other is sulky and keeps in the country." The occurrence excited much remark that "a creature of my Lord Portland," as Vernon described him, "should have superseded Albemarle;" it showed which way the wind was blowing after all. "I suppose it must cost the King something considerable to settle the balance," Vernon

[1] Tallard to Louis XIV. Utrecht, September 9. Grimblot, ii. 149.

[2] Prior writing to Lord Galway, November 13, 1698, says: "M. d'Allonne has succeeded to the office of Secretary for Dutch Affairs. He deserved it even before the death of Von Zulichem [Huygens]. I do not know why they kept it vacant so long."

observed sourly to Shrewsbury. Tallard attributed the real cause of a hurried visit which Lord Jersey paid to Holland at this time to this undignified dispute. It was rumoured that he was interrupting his ambassadorial duties in Paris for the purpose of receiving instructions for his conduct relating to King James; but it appeared more likely, and less creditable, that as the most intimate friend of Albemarle, he had been summoned to effect a reconciliation between him and the King. This he unfortunately succeeded in doing, on the basis of d'Allonne's receiving instructions from Albemarle and not from the King directly, "which," observed Tallard, "will be the source of an infinity of disputes, because the said d'Allonne is entirely devoted to the Earl of Portland, and never would consent to see Lord Albemarle."[1] The Villiers family, Jersey and "Betty," seem to have been always underhand and inimical in their relations with their brother-in-law. It was possibly this incident that finally determined Portland to retire: though on December 6, when the King went to open Parliament in State, it was once more William Bentinck who accompanied him in his coach.[2]

Early in 1699 two events happened which had an important bearing on European affairs. The Emperor made peace with the Turks, and the Electoral Prince died. This reopened the whole question of the Spanish Succession, so that Portland was still occupied with the subsequent negotiations, but the first part of the year the King was detained in England. The temper of the English Parliament had never been more captious and acrimonious. The decision to reduce the army to 7000 men, all of whom should be Englishmen, which entailed upon the King the necessity of dismissing his Dutch Guards,[3] so filled him with anger and mortification that he was only dissuaded by the passionate representations

[1] Tallard to Louis XIV., November 3, 1698, ii. 182. October 29 (O.S.).

[2] Luttrell, iv. 453.

[3] "I am so chagrined," he wrote to Heinsius, "at what has passed in the Lower House with regard to troops that I can scarce direct my thoughts to any other matter. I forsee that I shall be forced to take an extreme resolution, and I shall see you in Holland earlier than I had intended."

A little later he wrote on January 6 (16). "Things here in Parliament are desperate, so that in a short time I shall be obliged to do something that will make great 'éclat' in the world, whereof I can say nothing further for the present."

"As for the King he neither eats nor sleeps so well as he used to do," wrote Vernon to Shrewsbury (January 10, 1699).

of Somers from relinquishing the reins of Government and retiring to Holland. "The House of Commons has acted as in a fury," wrote the astonished Tallard. "It hastily determined to cashier the army." In May the King prorogued Parliament and went to Holland.

The lighter side of history is presented by Matthew Prior, who was not neglecting his opportunities. During his Embassy my Lord Portland had sat for his portrait to the French Court painter Rigaud. It was a wooden affair, and does not suggest the man. The secretary tactfully wrote to ask His Excellency if he might have a copy made of it for himself. Not, of course, at my Lord's expense, he is careful to add. He is prepared to pay the £30 for it out of his own pocket. Van Leeuwen, Portland's secretary, replied giving permission, and directing that the payment for the portrait should be placed to his account.

At the beginning of January [1] Prior wrote to say that Lord Jersey had made his entry, the ceremonial was modelled on that of Portland, "though they endeavoured to chicane us extremely." He adds that there was much rejoicing at St. Germains over the vote to limit the standing army to 7000 men.

One cannot read the correspondence of this man without conceiving a sort of distaste for him—for his shallow wit, his adroit flattery of the man in power, his lack of sincerity, and ever-watchful eye to his own advantage. Portland was too honest a man himself to suspect Prior's good faith and was evidently amused by his gossiping letters. On January 14 (24), 1698 (1699), he writes :

"There will be a ball at Versailles next week, my Lord Jersey will be at it, and I hear King James and his Queen will likewise be there, which will be a very odd interview, and will contradict King James's maxim that the rebels dare not look him in the face, and that he never saw above one or two of Bentinck's crew (for that is the name we have the honour to go by)."

Portland replies (January 30 (N.S.), Kensington) : "I am impatient to learn about the success of the ball, and the different company which was to be found there. . . . I beg

[1] January 10 (N.S.).

that you will send me the Lampoons that you have made" (on the subject of Villeroy).

It is curious to find Prior advising Portland with great frankness at this period as to what line should be taken towards the King. (March 11 (N.S.), Paris.) He had, he said, been letting the Court at Versailles see that

"the peevishness of the House is very far from favouring our friends at St. Germains. . . . If I were there [in England] I would venture to say at large to your Lordship what I just set down the sketch of here.

"The people of England are wild, at ease, and separate from the commerce and knowledge of the affairs of Europe; some that have a good deal of wit think too speculatively for want of experience in relation to things abroad. Many are personally malicious to the Court because they are not in it; the ministers therefore should give his Majesty at once a plain, direct and honest account how this general bent of the nation is at present, and not tell his Majesty things by halves, letting him see the worst side of them when it is too late, but if some of the ministers be too deep in their parties' interest to do this, his Majesty's business suffers from their partiality.

"His Majesty will be pleased to say the kindest things imaginable to the Parliament when he grants a thing, and the most like a King when he refuses, thus did Henry VII. and Henry VIII. and Elizabeth. . . . Every word and syllable that the King speaks bears a great weight through all Europe, particularly in this Court."

Portland's comment (March 6 (16)) is: "Vos raisons sont bonnes, et vos arguments de mesme mais vous ne comprenez pas que les meilleurs ne valent rien ici."

This pessimistic note is still further emphasised in another letter (March 3 (13)) in reply to one from Prior, in which he comments on the truculence of the House of Commons and the intrigues of St. Germain: "It is well that you have your eyes open, for my part I am so weary of the world, that if there were cloisters in our religion, I believe I should withdraw to one."

Prior hastened to respond, and after apologising for the freedom of his former letter, as to the effect of which he is evidently a little nervous, he concludes:

"The peevishness of our friends at St. Stephen's Chapel is enough to make any man wish for a cloister, but I hope in God your Lordship is above all such thoughts, for 'tis by such men as you that the tide must be stemmed and the waves broken."

Portland was occupied in continuing the negotiations that arose out of the death of the Electoral Prince at the end of January 1699. Tallard was again in London, and everything passed through his hands. Consequently he could not help observing the uncomfortable relationship between the King and his old friend and servant, Bentinck, and the continual friction between him and Albemarle. He commented on it to Louis XIV., who replied with the consummate worldly wisdom of the experienced diplomatist:

"Your good understanding with Lord Portland, being founded only on the affairs which you are to negotiate together, ought to be confined within the limits of these same affairs, and it would not be proper to extend it to private court intrigues, and to take any part between him and the Earl of Albemarle." [1]

The death of the little Electoral Prince Joseph from smallpox caused William no small consternation. He was doubtful of the line France would take and sought to mark time, while he consulted Heinsius, and instructed Portland to discover from Tallard the views of Louis XIV. While William was hesitating what course to take, the King of France had already decided. The proposals he made to Tallard were ultimately accepted. Briefly they were that the Emperor's second son, the Archduke Charles, should now take the place of the Electoral Prince as heir to the main Spanish Inheritance, while the Dauphin should have Milan added to his share. William proceeded to negotiate on these lines, writing to Heinsius (February 10 (20)) to ask his opinion.

William found himself in his old difficulty with regard to the Emperor during the progress of these discussions. He would now have preferred to open negotiations with Vienna, but France was insistent that the affairs should be kept secret. It is a considerable tribute to the astuteness of

[1] Grimblot, ii. p. 246, February 5. Louis XIV. to Tallard.

Tallard that he warned Louis XIV. not to build too much on the contumacious temper of Parliament. Once put them on their guard, he says, and "the same spirit of liberty and of fickleness which induces them to do all that I have had the honour to intimate to your Majesty, would determine them to give their last penny for their defence."

In April the King went to Newmarket. Portland, who was unwell at the time, remained at Windsor. The King wrote to him:

"I greatly doubt whether you will be able to adjust affairs in one conference, it is certain that the greatest difficulty will be Finale.[1] I hope to find you on Wednesday at Kensington entirely recovered from your cold. I am well enough although the weather is extraordinarily cold, but sport has been very medium. (It is impossible to love you more tenderly than I do. G.)"

The King was disappointed in his hope of finding Bentinck at Kensington on his return. He writes on April 20:

"I had hoped that I should find you here on my return yesterday evening. It is necessary that you should come here to-morrow to continue this negotiation, which you know is of too great importance to be delayed. I am very impatient to see you again. I love you ever the same."

The King had a meeting with Portland to discuss business; whether personal matters were mentioned does not appear. One can imagine that William's cordial pleasure at seeing him again was coldly received, on the one hand, and that any representations by Portland, if he made them, were impatiently brushed aside. On the 24th the King, forced now to conduct his business by writing, which must have been very irksome to him, writes again at nine p.m. that he is very anxious about determining this Concession of Finale.

[1] Finale, a seaport on the Genoese coast, which had been conceded to France by the First Partition Treaty, "the town and marquisate of Finale in the same manner likewise as the Spaniards hold them." (Grimblot, Text of Ty., app. i. 486.) The "two most essential points were Finale and consenting to the Archduke Charles's going to Spain." William to Heinsius, April 4 (14), p. 389.

"If you think there is no prospect of keeping it, and you think it would be better to propose the expedient of which I spoke to you this morning, to know whether France would engage not to make a port of it for men of war you could delay the Courier."

At this point, for some reasons that do not appear, Lord Portland finally determined that he could not continue to remain at Court. The King's own words and the comments of onlookers make it evident that William did everything possible to content him, to convince him of his continued affection, to soothe his jealousy and suspicion, everything, that is, except the one thing that would have attained this end—dismissing Albemarle. Finding it useless to make any more verbal protestations Bentinck at last wrote to the King words that he could not look him in the face and say:

April 21 (May 1).[1] "My experience, Sire, how difficult it is for your Majesty to listen to me with moderation, and my fear there may escape from me some murmur, which you may take as a reproach that may displease you, when I have to speak to you on so delicate a subject, oblige me to take this means of communicating to you my retirement to which I am forced as I have suffered as long as it was practicable. What such a separation means to our hearts is known to ourselves alone, and this secret will never leave mine, except so far as it must necessarily appear by this step. My action for the future will make you feel that my inclination for your person and my zeal for your service have never been diminished. My long and patient waiting [2] have sufficiently shown my confidence in the promises of your Majesty. I thought never to be deceived in judging of the feelings which you had for me, as you have always seen to the bottom of my heart, which has never kept anything back from you except some of these vexations. This is no time to agitate you, Sire, although I think that some day a return of the heart

[1] There is some confusion in the dates of the following letters between the old and new style. The present order seems most consistent with their contents.

[2] For two years.

will do more than enough." (There follows an imputation on the King's magnanimity unworthy of the writer.) "I beg your Majesty not to extend my misery to my family, so that it may not suffer more than is absolutely necessary, for never in the least thing that it could has it failed to mark its attachment to your interests and your service; and then I hope that it, like myself, will bear what may happen to me with patience and respect for the hand which causes my misery, resisting the load of adversity as best it may, and that we shall pray to God together to give you every happiness in a long life, and to crown it with his holiest blessings to all eternity; which will always be the ardent desire, Sire, of a man who has never wished otherwise for you.

"PORTLAND."

The King's reply is marked by the dignity and brevity characteristic of him. He does not allude to the insinuation contained in the last half of Bentinck's letter that the most generous of masters would take a mean revenge for his defection on his family.

April 21 (May 1). "It is impossible to express my surprise, or how sensibly I am touched by the letter which you wrote this morning. I do not pretend at present to enter into any detail or to answer you. But I cannot resist telling you that all the well-being and repose of all Europe may depend upon the negotiations which you have in hand with the Count de Tallard, and that you cannot be ignorant that while I am in England I can employ only you in it, and that it is impossible and even inconsistent with my dignity that this negotiation should be made between him and me. So I hope that when you have made serious reflection on this, you will return here, in order to complete, if possible, this important affair. For the rest I refer you to what d'Alonne will say on my behalf."

D'Allonne set out for Windsor on May 2 to try to bring Portland back to Kensington, but he remained obdurate. "I suppose it is a spice of the old jealousy against my Lord Albemarle's increasing favour," was Vernon's comment to

Shrewsbury. Portland remained at the Lodge at Windsor, a small house in the Park, one of the many presents William had bestowed upon him.[1] The King did all in his power, by every kindness he could show, to retain him in his service, bribes even were proffered, emoluments for himself and his family. He was given assurances that he should not encounter Albemarle in any way that might annoy him. Tallard reported that Albemarle himself was only eager to retain his rival about the Court, in order that he might not be left alone to bear the brunt of the English jealousy of foreigners; and Tallard was careful to keep on terms with both Bentinck and Albemarle, a difficult matter, as he owned.[2]

All was of no avail. One Sunday afternoon Bentinck appeared at Kensington to the surprise of the Court, and was for long closeted with the King after his Cabinet Council had risen. He remained two nights in London, and after having had another interview with the King and with Tallard, returned to Windsor. The same day William wrote to Heinsius, April 25:

"I must tell you with great grief that at last the Earl of Portland has retired, and that no persuasion has been able to withhold him. I have, however, with great difficulty got him to continue the negotiations with Tallard. I cannot tell you enough how this occurrence chagrins me, and the more because I have done everything to give satisfaction to the Earl of Portland, but a blind jealousy was bound to prevail over all that should be dear to him."

Portland told Tallard that he had only come to Kensington at the special request of the King and that he was returning to Windsor. He added that he intended to devote himself to the completion of the important business on which they were engaged together, and which was too far advanced to be transferred to other hands. Otherwise his mind was made up, and he would no longer take part in any business. He expressed his intention of settling in England and only making a short tour in Holland during the summer.[3] On April 28

[1] January 1699. The King had given him "The Little Park at Windsor." Luttrell, iv.

[2] Grimblot, ii. Tallard, May 2, 1699.

[3] Grimblot, 323. Tallard to Louis XIV., May 5, 1699.

the King wrote again to Portland, accepting his decision, and then dismissing the subject, he continued their business relations. For the last time he expressed his deep grief, unalterable confidence and affection :

" In order not to enter upon any dispute with you upon the subject of your retirement I will say nothing about it, but I cannot refrain from expressing to you my extreme grief, which goes further than you are capable of imagining, and assures me that if you felt half as much, you would very soon change your resolution ; may it please the good God to inspire you to do so, for your welfare and my repose. At least I hope you will not refuse to keep the key, for I am content that it should not oblige you to anything, and moreover I conjure you to see me as often as you can, which will be a great consolation to me in the affliction which you cause me, for I cannot help loving you always tenderly. G."

This letter was endorsed by Bentinck, " receu à Windsor le 28 d'Avril, 1699."

Another letter of the same date from the King deals only with business. The points relating to Finale it appeared would not be conceded.

" I am arranging to be at Windsor at the end of the next week, where I hope to see you, and where we can discuss this matter, unless you think it better rather to have a conference with Tallard, who seems strongly to press for the conclusion of the affair, and says that there can be no more delay in listening to the proposals for Spain, which I take for a threat."

The King's letter seems to have caused Bentinck some umbrage. He resented the reproachful tone that his master adopted. His reply has a note of peevishness :

" Windsor, May 1 (11).

" I am obliged to your Majesty for not saying anything to me about my retreat ; if you consider that I do not feel it more than yourself, it is doing me an injustice, and it is again necessary that I should trust to time, which will not fail to justify me in your mind, and sufficiently to convince

you that my feelings are such as they ought to be with regard to you. You are the judge of yours to me. I will not enter into any dispute, but will submit to my misfortune with respect, never doing anything that could displease you. . . . I am much troubled that M. d'Allonne refuses to take charge of the Commission that I cannot give to any other person without more pain and a worse grace."

Later on M. d'Allonne consented to take charge of the key and deliver it to the King. He told Vernon that William had finally given Portland leave to resign it, " which My Lord received with great joy and huge professions of zeal and fidelity." Bentinck sent a note, of which he seems to have kept a copy, by d'Allonne when returning the key. In sending " cette marque de ma charge," he says, " I cannot better express my gratitude than by saying although I should have had all the reason in the world to complain, my heart would not have changed on that account."

It was expected that he would remain at Windsor and superintend the gardens, as the King refused to allow him to live where he pleased. Bentinck remained till the end of May at his Lodge at Windsor, seeing the King from time to time when the negotiations with which he was charged made it necessary. William, it seems, still had hopes of a complete reconciliation. As an earnest of his kindness for his old friend, he visited Bentinck's sister, and his children, at his house in town, paying them " all kinds of courtesies." Luttrell reports that the King dined with the Earl of Portland at his Lodge on May 10.

Portland's old friend Romney [1] went with the King to Holland, and was acting as Groom of the Stole, though the key had not then been given to him. The King started on his journey on June 3. Portland went abroad shortly afterwards. His old place in the King's coach was occupied by Albemarle. M. de B., whose estimate of Portland's character has already been quoted, comments :

" Twenty millions that he had amassed, having had less than 100 florins income of his own, served to console him, and to make his retirement supportable to him. Seeing his

[1] Henry Sidney.

credit decline, he requested release from all his employments, relinquished the most lucrative posts, and retiring to the country with his second wife, occupied himself solely with the care of establishing his family advantageously."

That this was an overstatement of the case is obvious. Bentinck did not immediately settle in the country, and at the time of his retirement he had not married again. On the subject of his retirement Lord Portland wrote to Prior with considerably less than his accustomed proud reserve. The topic was introduced by Prior himself, who writes discreetly from Paris, May 6, 1699. " . . . The discourse ran upon a subject which I ask your Lordship's pardon that I dare mention ; you will know that it was your not going to Newmarket." [1]

To which tentative inquiry Lord Portland replied :

" May 1 (11). Windsor. . . . People like to talk everywhere, and more there, where you are, than elsewhere. I am vexed enough at giving so much subject for it as that of my retirement, but there is no help for it. I assure you, that whereever I am, I shall be your sincere friend although a useless one."

Prior was not the man to be in any doubt as to the exact amount of utility to be extracted from his fellows or to waste time on spent cartridges, but if his reply was not sincere, it was an excellent example of all that was proper under the circumstances, and a very good imitation of sincerity. May 20 (N.S.). Paris :

" I am so dead-hearted, my Lord, with your letter of the 1st instant, that I know not if I can write sense or no. If the great respect which I bear to your Lordship has made me never yet dare to touch upon one certain chord, whilst I only heard talk of the thing, of the doubts and surmises of other people, the concern I am now in, since you speak of it yourself, gives me an assurance which otherwise I should not have taken, which is to hope that all will yet be reconciled, and that I may long see my protector and patron at Court.

[1] Longleat Papers.

After the resolution of your own prudence and the advice of friends, what one should say at this distance would be very impertinent, but I should think that the nearness and friendship which has been so long between his Majesty and your Lordship, should be divided by nothing but your deaths. . . . 'Que diroit-on?' in relation to his Majesty ought to be a consideration at a time when my Lord Portland has thoughts of leaving him. You must pardon me, my Lord, that I venture to talk thus. . . . Believe me in this one truth that, however my poor affairs may suffer by this great stroke, or in what station soever you may be, if you should retire (which I hope God will yet avert), I shall always remain," etc.

Lord Portland, at least convinced of Prior's sincerity, replied with a kindness and confidence that his correspondent little merited. May 22 (June 1):

"That which I have just done was resolved upon long before going to France. You, however, are a witness of the manner in which I have served the King; I shall do the same as long as the good God grants me life; and if honour, which ought to be to us the dearest thing in this world, has obliged me to sacrifice my interests, and to form the resolution of changing my condition, that will never change my heart . . . in all the discussion that you have heard, of the reasons or pretexts which decided me to retire, there is not a word of truth. . . . I may say that the King sincerely regrets it, but if you could know all my circumstances you would consider with me that I have been right. This is all that I can tell you."

Prior's response to this mark of confidence on the part of his late Chief was to write to Lord Jersey on May 30: "Swager [brother-in-law],[1] they say, will after all take consideration in his anger, and be over-persuaded to vex the King longer, as they think fitting."

The negotiations were now continued in Holland, while the King was at Loo and Bentinck was at the Hague. Delays

[1] *I.e.* Portland.

at Vienna and the irresolution of that Court caused the King much anxiety, as his letters to Heinsius and to Portland show. There is nothing of interest till August, and indeed all the letters of this period, August and September 1699, are concerned solely with business. There are no longer the intimate touches, scraps of gossip, and expressions of affection that gave charm to the earlier correspondence. However deeply the King was wounded, however sore he felt, his letters give no hint of either.

One close and not unsympathetic observer noted how deeply Portland felt the resolution he had taken. Auersperg asked him how, after having taken part in all public business for thirty years, he could reconcile himself now, in the prime of his age, to the life of a country gentleman? Portland replied that he could do it, for he had been so brought up. But throughout all his talk and philosophising, added the Ambassador, "he involuntarily sighed deeply many times. A man of such high rectitude can only have believed himself to be acting conscientiously."

If Bentinck felt the estrangement deeply, the King felt it at least equally. The mortification attendant on public affairs in England had told seriously on his already failing health, the poignant personal grief of the final breach with his old friend and servant was an additional strain. No wonder that beneath so heavy a burden the renewed anxiety relating to foreign affairs imposed a stress before which his accustomed insight and statesmanship seemed to fail. It appeared as though his vision was blinded by his longing for peace. Hence Louis XIV.'s successful deception of the one man capable of forestalling his aims.

The opinion of Auersperg at this time, formed after talking with Members of Parliament, was that the English feared a war less than they feared a revival of the Stuart alliance with France. He sought to represent this point of view to Portland, who asked: "Why then have these people disarmed the kingdom?" Auersperg replied that this action of the House of Commons bore no relation to foreign affairs, but merely to domestic ones; to assure the authority of Parliament in case the King did not observe the fundamental laws of the Kingdom. The House also held, rightly or wrongly, that in case of need the army could be quickly raised again.[1]

[1] Bericht, Mai 19, 1699. Klopp, viii. 38.

During the negotiations, so futile as the event proved, for the Second Partition Treaty of the autumn of 1699, William strove to include the Emperor. His frequent letters to Heinsius are full of complaints of the vacillations and delays in Vienna. The Emperor Leopold could not bring himself to consent to an arrangement by which any part of Italy remained in the hands of France. He would rather have seen Spain and America in the hands of a younger son of the Dauphin than any part of Italy. Auersperg was instructed to propose that Peru or Mexico should be offered to a younger son of the Dauphin. Heinsius pointed out that the owner of Mexico and Peru could exclude all other nations from trade with America, and when Auersperg objected that while they feared some diminution in the profits of Dutch merchants they gave no heed to the fact that with France in Italy the Emperor would not be safe in Vienna; Portland, more vehement than Heinsius, declared that it was a poor return to the King for all his friendly efforts, to advance an offer which would entail the ruin of both nations. Rather would he put his hand in a slow fire, than subscribe to such a dishonour; even if he did so by the King's command he knew that he would have to answer for it to the Parliament of England with his head.

This expression of Portland's is interesting in the light of subsequent events, and explains his nervous anxiety in the final attack upon him by the English Parliament.

This, then, was the position. William strove to include the Emperor in a treaty with France which should secure the peace of Europe to the advantage of Holland. The Emperor failed to see his interests in the same light. Louis XIV., while deceiving both, bided his time to secure the whole of the inheritance for France.

On August 21 William wrote from Dieren to Portland:

"I am very sorry at the disinclination on the part of Vienna to come to an agreement about the Spanish Succession, and it is too evident that we shall be forced in the end to make a separate treaty with France, of which I was always extremely afraid. I much wish that the term for treating could be prolonged, which would not be contrary to the interests of France, except that she would be very glad to force the Emperor, by a separate treaty, to consent

to what we shall agree upon, which I would avoid if possible."

On September 3 (13) William wrote to Heinsius to say that Portland had informed him of the discovery by Quiros, Spanish Ambassador at the Hague, of their negotiations. The same day he wrote from Loo to Portland at the Hague, saying he was very embarrassed as to what answer should be made to Quiros, on his behalf, with regard to the Spanish Succession. "For the present we must confine ourselves to general terms and compliments which signify nothing." Portland must settle with the Pensionary in order that they speak the same language, "as no doubt the Vienna negotiations cannot be secret much longer."

The Spanish Ambassador in London, Canales, made an indignant protest, not to the King, but to the Lords Justices, expressing his intention of bringing the matter before Parliament when it assembled. This was at the end of September. William wrote to Portland from Loo enclosing the "impertinent and seditious paper which the Spanish Ambassador has had given to each of the Lords Justices in England in order that you may communicate it to the Pensionary." The Spanish Ambassador had been ordered to leave in eighteen days.[1]

"After this," the King adds, "I shall be entirely *brouillé* with Spain, about which I am by no means easy at this conjuncture, but I do not see how it could be avoided, as it is impossible to suffer such insolence. I do not doubt that France will be pleased, and that she will see clearly that naturally I shall be at present more obliged to conclude the treaty promptly. I have sent for Lord Jersey to sign it with you in case it is necessary to conclude it before I leave for England."

The paper is to be shown to Tallard at Portland's discretion. "Its style is so extraordinary that one cannot forbear

[1] Luttrell quotes the message of the King to the Spanish Ambassador. "For your seditious memorial your house is your prison while you stay, and in eighteen days you are to depart the kingdom." It was delivered by Vernon, who described to Shrewsbury the delight of the Spaniard at receiving it. Vernon to Shrewsbury, September 30 (O.S.), 1699. Coxe.

laughing as one reads it." This letter concludes: "It is very necessary above all to stipulate for the longest possible term, so that the Emperor may come in."

A postscript refers to the failure of the Darien scheme [1] which was then causing widespread distress. The King had already instructed Portland to say that the affair was done without his knowledge September 3 (13). He now adds:

"Although I am very glad to be free at present from embarrassment about the Darien affair, I pity with all my heart the poor Scotch, who have lost so much, and were not the promoters of this enterprise. I fear also that this will cause plenty of troubles in Scotland, in which I also shall have my share. G."

A copy of the Spanish Ambassador's memorial was enclosed together with a letter from Schonenberg, Dutch envoy at Madrid, warning William that Canales was working to form a party in Parliament to demand from Portland an account of his negotiations with France. The last letter of this series is dated from Loo, October 12. In it the King informs Bentinck that he had put the treaty "into the hand of Lord Jersey who has left for the Hague this morning to sign it with you." [2]

Bentinck's return to England was deferred some time longer; he arrived with his family on October 21. The King waited till "the light nights at the end of the month," landing at Margate on the 27th. Bentinck was, however, not yet free to retire into private life; his public duties were not yet accomplished. Holland had not yet signed the treaty, and the Emperor had three months in which to come in. Bentinck took up his residence at the Lodge in Windsor Park to be within reach of the King if he were wanted, and the business between them was continued by correspondence.

[1] A trading company established by the Scottish Parliament in the Isthmus of Darien. Letters Patent had been ordered by Parliament under the Great Seal, but without a warrant from the Crown. The enterprise failed from pestilence and Spanish hostility.

[2] Luttrell, September 21, 1699. "An express came from Holland with a letter from his Majesty commanding the Earl of Jersey to attend him immediately at the Hague, upon which his Lordship set sail yesterday in the *William and Mary* yacht, 'tis generally thought to sign a new treaty about the Succession of Spain."

On October 31 William writes from Windsor enclosing a letter from Heinsius. It is endorsed by Bentinck, "reçu a Windsor." A few days later the King forwards another letter from the Pensionary "that you may be informed of what passes in the negotiation that you have in hand." On November 10 the King writes to say that Amsterdam "absolutely refuses to enter into the proposed Alliance, you may judge how embarrassing this is to me." Two days later Portland is summoned to Windsor about eleven o'clock as Prior had returned with the latest inside news from Paris. Prior had remained behind as Chargé d'Affaires in the interim that elapsed before the Earl of Manchester could arrive to take up his duties as Ambassador.[1]

On November 26 the King writes to Portland to tell him that Tallard had arrived, and had had an audience about which he must speak to him "ainsi je vous prie d'estre icy après demain Mardi au matin vers les onze eures. G." This interview with Tallard had been very unsatisfactory. The French Ambassador was much out of humour at the fresh delay in signing the treaty. The King could wait no longer, and must take other measures, he said. William noticed that he was seeing Auersperg and affecting great familiarity with him, which he thought was intended as a hint to himself that Louis would settle the affair of the Succession with the Emperor independently.

Portland and Jersey had been at pains to assure Auersperg on his return that King William would never renounce the Emperor; Marlborough, Vernon, even Albemarle, all evidently by order, impressed upon him the King's good intentions towards Imperial interests.

At last the Pensionary was able to send the good news that Amsterdam had consented to the treaty.[2] William forwarded the letter to Bentinck on January 10, 1700, and a little later the King was writing to Heinsius to say that Lord Portland had now adjusted everything with Tallard, and the treaty would be signed in a few days.[3]

Before the signature of the treaty William took into his confidence the Chiefs of the Whig Party, Somers, Orford and Montague. After a brief hesitation they consented.

[1] Charles Montague, one of the earliest adherents of William, previously Ambassador in Venice, now succeeded Jersey in Paris.

[2] William to Heinsius, January 5 (15).

[3] Heinsius, February 2 (12), 1700.

The treaty was signed in London, February 21 (March 3), by Portland and Jersey, Tallard and Briord. It was signed at the Hague on March 25 by a representative of each of the seven provinces. Ratifications still had to be exchanged. On April 14 the King writes to Portland directing him to give instructions for sending the French ratification to Jersey, and that he should send a messenger to Holland on this business. Like nearly all the letters the King wrote Portland this year it was very short, and in this case written on half a sheet of paper, directed, "For the Earl of Portland," and sealed with the King's monogram. These last brief letters from the King are ragged and discoloured, as if worn from being carried in a pocket. Lord Portland, in the voluntary exile from the presence of his master, may have solaced himself with reading and re-reading these words from his hand.

It is a melancholy thing that these closing years of the King's life should have been clouded by the estrangement of his friend. He was in failing health and had neither wife nor child to care for his well being, the pressure of anxiety caused by foreign affairs was as acute as it had ever been, and this session of Parliament had been more offensive to him as a King and as a man than any previous one. Its temper was soon shown in a determined attack on his Dutch favourites. In the spring of 1699 a commission had been appointed to inquire into the grants of confiscated lands in Ireland in 1690. William, writing to Galway [1] in August from Loo, had commented on "that fine commission which I doubt not will cause me much vexation and mortification next winter." The attack was aimed at the foreigners who had received the grants; at Portland, Albemarle, Athlone,[2] Galway,[3] at Betty Villiers, now Lady Orkney, and through them at the King.

In December the House resolved to bring in a Bill that the Irish Estates should be applied to the public service. Constitutionally the King had a right to dispose as he pleased of the Crown domains, but his position with regard to the Irish lands, forfeited after the Pacification of Limerick, was different. A Bill for directing their application to the public service had been before the House in 1690, when William,

[1] Grimblot, ii. 341 (August 14, 1699).
[2] Ginkel.
[3] Galway, Earl of, Marquis de Ruvigny, leader of French Protestant Refugees. Had fought with William in Ireland and at Landen.

whose presence was urgently called for at the Hague Congress, had put an end to the session. At this time the King promised that he would not dispose of the property under discussion till they had had an opportunity of deciding upon it. The Bill, however, was not brought in again, and after some time had elapsed, the King, believing himself free to act as he thought fit, had disposed of the larger part of the estates among his friends and servants. The largest grant had been made to Portland's eldest son, Lord Woodstock, the second largest to Albemarle. The grant to Lady Orkney was from the Crown domains, and consequently was on an entirely different footing, but the King's enemies were quick to make capital out of the ancient scandal connected with her name, as well as to exaggerate the value of the grant to about six times its amount. The Majority Report of the Commission appointed greatly magnified the value of the grants and attributed to them part of the heavy post-war taxation.

In April of the next year, 1700, the Resumption Bill was passed, vesting in the hands of trustees all the forfeited lands, and anticipating opposition from the Lords, the Commons tacked it to a Money Bill. The Lords, much as they disliked the Dutch favourites, determined to make a stand. A dangerous constitutional crisis became imminent, and a violent contest between the two Houses ensued, during which Portland as well as Albemarle thought it expedient to vote for the second reading of the Bill. It was eventually passed by the influence of the King. The Commons were encouraged to further excesses. They resolved to present an address to the King that no foreigner, with the exception of Prince George, should be a member of the Privy Council. The King took the only step possible for him : the next morning, April 11 (21), he prorogued Parliament till the end of May.

The King was not yet free to make his longed-for escape to Holland, and the end of this year saw Portland once more involved in public business. During June the existence of the Second Partition Treaty became known in England, and was very ill received. Too much, it was considered, had been conceded to France, Spain had been unfairly dealt with, and the secrecy with which the affair had been conducted added still further to William's unpopularity. The feeling of Parliament was represented in the expression of opinion of some members to Auersperg that not a penny would be voted for its execution.

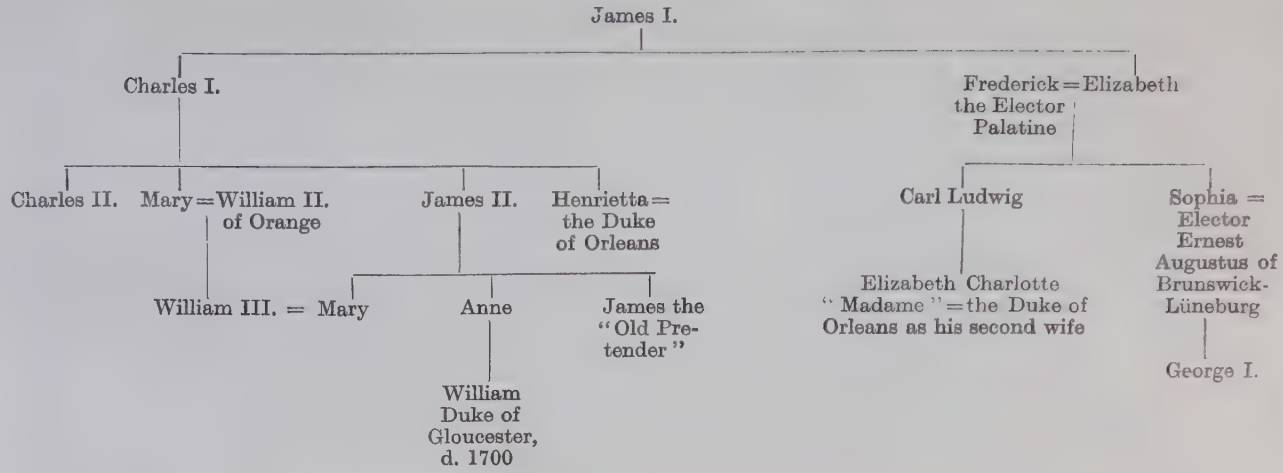
Ill feeling in England had now reached a climax, while abroad the prospect was ominous. "The King finds himself in great want of some one he may be free with," Vernon had written two years earlier in Portland's absence. William could then still depend upon the Lord Chancellor Somers, but the continued attacks upon that wise and upright Minister in Parliament induced the King to forego his services in April of this year, in the hope of being able to achieve the formation of a more united ministry from among the Tories.

William was detained in England partly by Scottish affairs till the late summer, although he was in failing health and more than usually anxious to be in his native country. He writes to Heinsius, June 7 (17): "It [Scotland] now hinders above all my journey to Holland, which I long for more than ever, and fear surely to become ill, if I remain here longer. I have been indisposed for some days, but am now better again." And a few days later, "I cannot say enough how greatly I long for Dutch air." [1]

The King was, in fact, seriously ill. Before sailing for Holland in July the two most famous English doctors of the day, Ratcliffe and Millington, held a consultation on the King's health. The continued swelling of his left leg occasioned him much uneasiness. The doctors could not agree. Ratcliffe took a very serious view of the case, which he attributed to dropsy. Millington took a more courtierlike and favourable view of the King's health, to which William himself inclined. But arrived at Loo, he found himself no better; he was tormented by asthma, and could hardly walk, much less hunt, but only ride slowly through the beloved and familiar ways on a little horse trained for the purpose. The question of his succession began to be discussed both in Holland and in England, where it was raised by the death of Anne's last surviving child, the little Duke of Gloucester. It was not known whom the King would support as his successor.[2] Even Portland, it was said, had no knowledge of the King's views, but he had not seen him for many weeks.[3] William was anxious to establish the Protestant Succession in England. He believed that in the event of his own death England would either become a Republic or the son of James II. would be called to the throne, events equally unfortunate

[1] June 14. [2] See p. 377. [3] Coxe Papers, Add. MSS. No. 9090.

THE HANOVERIAN SUCCESSION.



for England, and still more for Holland. The crowning act of his life was the establishment of the Hanoverian Succession.

On November 1 died the moribund King of Spain, the premature reports of whose death had so often agitated the Courts of Europe. He bequeathed the Spanish Dominions to the Duke of Anjou.

Louis XIV. accepted the throne for his grandson. The pomp and ceremony with which he accomplished its acceptance, and his affectation of surprise, may be read in the pages of St. Simon. A specious Memorial in which the King of France set forth his reasons for his repudiation of the Partition Treaty was drawn up and presented to the English Ambassador, Manchester. Rochester, as one of the heads of the Tory Party, at the same time assured William that the dislike of the English for the Partition Treaty was so strong that it was useless to count upon the support of the nation in enforcing it.

William forwarded copies of the Memorial to Heinsius. In the whole business, he said, what he took most to heart was that he would be blamed for having relied upon engagements with France, after having had so much experience that they were never bound by any treaty. "I wish that I were free from blame."

To Portland the King wrote (Hampton Court, November 7, 1700), enclosing the memorial that "de Torcy had given M.L. Manchester." It would be very easy to refute, he says,

"but what chagrins me extremely is to learn that the majority of people here believe it more advantageous for the interest of England that France should hold to the will, and not to the treaty, which is a doctrine that I can never comprehend. I think that this great change in the situation of affairs will oblige me not to think of going to Scotland, even if affairs in Parliament go badly there. I have written nothing to the Duke of Queensberry. If it is fine on Saturday I could very well come to shoot in Windsor Park."

At this difficult juncture intercourse seems to have been to some extent resumed between Bentinck and William, for the King wrote again: "December 5 (16), *Jeudi matin*," to

say that business would prevent his coming to Windsor and required Portland to come to Hampton Court instead "to-morrow morning."

In December the King had attempted to form a united Tory Ministry, and summoned Rochester and Godolphin to his Councils, but he sought in vain to rouse Parliament to any action against France, even when the French forced the Dutch to acknowledge Philip of Anjou by seizing in the Netherlands the 15,000 Dutch troops sent to garrison the barrier fortresses. Indeed, it appeared as though Louis XIV. had achieved the master-stroke of his policy. He had broken the impregnable front of his allied enemies; he had attained his end, it appeared impossible to wrest it from him. William III. had his trump card still to play. He set himself to build up over again the Alliance of 1689 in order to snatch from Louis the prize he had already grasped. It seemed a hopeless enough task, with decaying physical energies and the English Parliament alienated and hostile.

England would remain passive, said Vernon to the Imperial Ambassador Hoffmann, and the taking possession of the Spanish throne by the Duke of Anjou was no more to be hindered than walking from one room into another.[1]

"Here," William wrote to Heinsius, "men are very calm, and trouble their thoughts little over this great change in the world's affairs. It often appears as if it were a punishment from Heaven that people here are so little concerned with anything that takes place outside the Island."

When Parliament met in February 1701, its attitude to Foreign Affairs was apathetic.

The Succession Act was indeed passed, settling the Crown upon the Electress Sophia of Hanover, but the main interest and energy of the House of Commons was again concentrated on party warfare. This session it took the form of attacks on the Whig Ministers. Impeachments were brought against Portland, Somers, Orford, Halifax. This was the most determined attack on him that William Bentinck had had to face—the most fraught with danger, though at the same time it was the least warranted. He was

[1] Hoffmann's dispatch, November 26 (Klopp, viii. 630). Klopp points out that William's hands were now strengthened by the very fact that the Emperor had never approved of the treaty.

now in a much less secure position from which to parry attacks, no longer the all-powerful confidant through whose hands everything passed, but regarded by the world at large as a fallen favourite. It may have been the consciousness of this which caused him to act tactlessly and very much aggravate a perilous situation. The trouble began in the Lords, where the question of the Partition Treaties was discussed with considerable heat. In subsequent parliamentary debates members severely criticised Portland and Jersey, whose signatures stood at the foot of the Second Partition Treaty. In March, at the request of the Lords, the King had all the treaties which had been concluded since the Peace of Ryswick laid before them. There were, however, no instructions for their negotiation. Portland and Jersey stated that these had been given to them verbally. In the attacks upon the Second Partition Treaty, which followed, the Duke of Devonshire expressed the opinion that whoever had had a hand in it should answer for it with his head. The treaty was declared to be as ridiculous as it was unjust. Such violent talk was carried on for five hours, without anyone's daring to say a word in the treaty's defence. Finally the House of Lords determined on an address to the Throne declaring the treaty to have been of very ill consequences to the peace and safety of Europe, and requesting the King in future to make no treaties of such importance except with the advice of his Privy Council. There the matter might and should have ended, but Portland, with a lack of judgment curiously unlike himself, went with Jersey to the King and requested permission to defend himself, which he at once received.[1] The next day he rose in the House and declared that he had done nothing with regard to the treaty without the King's express orders and communication with the King's Ministers.

Far from this statement being accepted as a justification, there were immediate cries of "Which Minister?" "Name!" Plunging still further into indiscretion, Portland threw to the wolves Somers, Orford, Halifax and Vernon. He also delivered to the House the following paper exonerating his action:[2]

"At the beginning of the summer of the year 1699 when

[1] Hoffmann, March 29, 1701. Klopp, ix. 194 *seq.*
[2] Parliamentary Debates.

I was in Holland, at my country house, and when the King would have me concerned in the negotiation of this treaty with the Emperor, the French King and the States; being very unwilling to meddle with business again, from which I was retired, before I would engage myself I advised with my friends in Holland, and writ into England to Mr. Secretary Vernon, as my particular friend, whether it was advisable for me to engage in any business again. To which Mr. Vernon answered in substance that this would not engage me but for a little while: that I being upon the place, and generally acquainted with the foreign ministers, it would be easier for the King, and properer for me to be employed in it than anybody else that must be otherwise sent for on purpose."

Somers, sensible that a storm was coming on, inquired of Lord Portland whether his name was mentioned in the letter from Mr. Secretary Vernon, and

"Lord Portland stood up and declared that if he had remembered any such thing in the letter, and had not inserted it in the paper which he had delivered to the House, he should have thought he had deceived the House."

Bentinck had naturally incurred the resentment of the four members of the House of Lords whose names he had mentioned. He did not improve his position by an attempted defence of the Partition Treaty, in which he maintained that the Emperor was not merely cognisant of everything, but himself desired a treaty, and only dissented from one detail with regard to the Duchy of Milan. The four Lords in their turn sought the King's permission to speak out. Halifax was their spokesman. They had indeed, he said, been acquainted with the treaty, and had raised certain objections to it, but were told that the King had already engaged himself too deeply to withdraw from it. Thus it was obvious that the treaty had been made in Holland, with the sole advice of Dutchmen, and especially of Portland. "Everyone," wrote Hoffmann, "blamed his lack of discretion for having brought a matter that was as good as ended

into such a coil," and marvelled at such an error of judgment on the part of so clear-headed and far-sighted a man.

Finally the debate in the Lords ended with a witty comment from Lord Wharton that whoever accused the makers of the treaty excused the breaker of it, and the House returned to the Address to the Throne.

In the House of Commons the matter was far from ended. On April 1 they moved that " William Earl of Portland by negotiating and concluding the Treaty of Partition (which was destructive to the trade of this Kingdom, and dangerous to the Peace of Europe) is guilty and shall be impeached of high crimes and misdemeanours." He was impeached by Sir John Levison Gower at the bar of the House of Lords.

During the debate only one voice was raised in his defence in the House of Commons,[1] and this not so much for the purpose of exonerating Lord Portland as to implicate Somers.

" I am," said this speaker, " not a friend of the Earl of Portland, but it provokes me almost to compassion that among so many persons, who once in the time of his favour and power, counted themselves happy to receive from him a smile or a slight nod, or to drink chocolate with his lackeys in his ante-room, here not a single one stands up for him. That indeed is the mutability of human things, but if one takes into consideration the circumstances, that Portland is a foreigner, from his youth up in the immediate vicinity of the King; he is therefore more inclined than another to acquiesce in his commands. Not so is it with the named Ministers who took part in the treaty. Them it behoved to know the laws and interests of the country better than a stranger."

And he named Lord Chancellor Somers, who had affixed the Great Seal to the treaty.

In the Lords Portland had referred to a collective writing received from Somers, Halifax and Vernon as the authorisation for his part in the treaty. " The Earl of Portland," says Burnet, " had mistaken the circumstance, which did

[1] Hoffmann, April 12. Klopp, ix. 208. Luttrell, April 1, 1700, vol. v.

not belong to the last Partition Treaty, but to that of the year before in favour of the Prince Electoral of Bavaria." The House of Commons, hearing of this, required Secretary Vernon to lay before them that letter, with his answer to it; for the Earl of Portland said that he had left all papers relating to that matter in Holland.[1]

This apparent evasion on the part of Lord Portland only envenomed the spirit of his enemies. His impeachment was resolved upon; it was followed by that of the three Whig Ministers, Somers, Orford and Halifax (Montague).[1] Further, the Tory Party, not content with the impeachments, presented an address to the King requesting him to remove Somers, Orford and Halifax, together with Portland, from his presence and councils for ever. This attempt to prejudice the case against their members before trial produced from the House of Lords a counter-address asking the King not to pass any censure upon the four Lords. To this address the King returned no reply.

The House of Commons had given an assurance that they would stand by and support the King against all his enemies at home and abroad. William meanwhile had been biding his time; to Heinsius, indeed, he commented freely on the situation,[2] but none of the men by whom he was surrounded knew his mind. Reticent and far-sighted as ever, he now handled the dangerous contest with a tact so skilful that it was unsuspected by the combatants on either side. He ignored the causes of strife between the two Houses, and in his reply to the Commons, after thanking them for the assurance of their support, told them they might rely upon his retaining in his service only such persons as should improve that mutual trust and confidence "which is so necessary in this conjuncture, both for our own security and the defence and preservation of our allies."

The European crisis was indeed approaching while in the English Parliament the absorbing attack on the four Lords excluded this or any other consideration. But Parliament

[1] Hoffmann pointed out in his dispatch of April 26 that the impeachment of the three Ministers was instigated much more from Party hatred than their alleged responsibility for the treaties.

[2] William to Heinsius, Kensington. He had written previously that people here "now begin to talk of the necessity of a war, more that I could ever have believed." He adds, April 6: "Meanwhile I am exposed to the necessity of receiving from both Houses of Parliament the most impertinent addresses on account of the Partition Treaties that could be devised."

had ceased to represent the common sense of the country at large. One morning early in June a placard appeared on the door of the House, which expressed the rising tide of disapproval: "Three Kingdoms for sale here, inquire within."

The date fixed for the trial of Somers, June 17, was approaching. The impeachment against him was to be taken first. The Lords, having refused the demand of the Commons to grant them any extension of time to complete their impeachments, repaired in State to Westminster Hall on the appointed date. Chagrined at what they declared to be a breach of justice, the Commons failed to appear. In the absence of any accusers Somers was declared acquitted. Before further action could be taken the King prorogued Parliament on June 24. So ended what must have been for Portland a time of actual danger and grave anxiety. And though it is possible to trace something of his subsequent career, he passes that June morning for ever out of public life into the comparative obscurity of a country gentleman.

So long and so closely associated with public affairs, he cannot have looked on unmoved at the stirring events of the next few months. In England a revulsion of feeling against party quarrels found expression in the "Kentish Petition" and the Legion Memorial. In Holland the spirit of the people was roused by Louis XIV.'s continued retention of the barrier fortresses. When William went to Holland he was able to revive at least the shadow of the Grand Alliance between England, Holland and the Emperor. Its terms were the measure of the weakness of the Allies. The Treaty was completed in September; but as in 1688, so in 1701, Louis XIV. did more for his enemies than they were in a position to do for themselves. In the autumn of 1701 James II.'s melancholy years of failure and exile drew to a close. On his death Louis XIV. did the one thing that could have united and animated the English people against him. In contravention of the Treaty of Ryswick, to attain which they had waged war for nine long years, he publicly recognised James II.'s son as King of England. This act

Note.—Burnet says when at last, at the instance of the Lords themselves, impeachments were proceeded with, no articles were found against Portland, which was represented to William as an expression of respect to himself. The impeachment against Portland was dismissed by the Lords on the last day of the session. See Luttrell (v. 64) and Parliamentary Debates, June 24, 1701.

produced an intense and universal revulsion of feeling. From all over the country came resolutions and addresses expressing the loyal affection of the people for their King. Once more William could look out upon the rising tide of success, once more he could feel assured that the work of his life would be consummated after all.

But he was only to view the promised land. His high courage had hitherto overcome the physical weakness and suffering of the last months; that his mental powers were unimpaired the last year's State correspondence with Heinsius gives abundant proof. The accident of a fall from his horse at Hampton Court in February, when he broke his collar-bone, though it greatly alarmed his physicians at first, appeared to be after all not as dangerous as had been expected. The King returned to Hampton Court for his midday meal, and later on drove to Kensington. The jolting over the rough roads in the heavy coaches of that day aggravated the injury. Bleeding was proposed, but negatived by Bidloo, his Dutch physician, who rightly feared its effect on the King in his weak state. No doubt Bidloo's judgment was correct, but it was afterwards said that bleeding would have saved the King's life. William slept well, and next day felt no pain except from his habitual cough. The surgeons held that he would recover from the injury in two or three weeks. Meanwhile he was able to attend to urgent parliamentary business. On March 2 (12) he walked for some time in the gallery of Kensington Palace, that gallery in which long before Huygens had rehung the pictures under Bentinck's direction. The King craved for air and ordered the windows to be opened. He was easily tired, and sank into a seat near one of the open windows opposite the fireplace. Here he dropped asleep. His attendants feared to disturb him by entering unbidden. He remained there for an hour; the late afternoon air blew chilly across the Park. At last the King awoke shivering with cold. The next day he was seized with ague. He again rallied, and on the morning of the 6th he looked better, was able to eat, and drank a glass of Spanish white wine. Later, against the advice of his doctors, he sent for some beer. William never allowed himself to be dictated to as to his diet, but was accustomed to eat and drink as he pleased. In his weak state a very little thing sufficed to produce an ill effect. In the afternoon he was seized with an attack of sickness that left

him greatly exhausted. He breathed with difficulty and he fell into a restless sleep; towards morning his pulse was very weak.

Hitherto the King had had neither Bentinck nor Albemarle to attend on him. Bentinck was at his country seat at Bulstrode. Albemarle had been sent to Holland to lay before Heinsius papers relating to the King's schemes for an early campaign. He hurriedly returned, and hastening to Kensington arrived there at five o'clock on the morning of the 7th. He was at once admitted to the King's bedside. At sight of his master's altered looks Albemarle could not restrain his tears. William appeared not to remark them and asked for the news that was nearest his heart. It was so good that if anything could have revived the King's failing energies that would have done so. All was in readiness, but there could no longer be any doubt in the minds of those by whom he was surrounded that the end was approaching. He listened indifferently, and soon afterwards murmured, "Je tire vers ma fin." He then gave to Albemarle the keys of his private papers.

On the next day he sent for the Archbishop of Canterbury and received the last sacrament. His mind remained clear, and he thanked Ouwerkerk for his long and faithful services; but his earliest and most devoted servant was still absent. Surely at this supreme hour William Bentinck should have been in attendance. The King waited for him in vain, almost the last orders that he gave were that he should be sent for. The messenger was for some reason delayed. When Bentinck at last reached the bedside of the dying man he was beyond speech; his words of farewell remained for ever unspoken: only he took him by the hand and carried it to his heart with great tenderness. Perhaps in that mute gesture more was said and forgiven and understood than in many words.

CHAPTER XIII

1702–1709

LAST YEARS—CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE HANOVERIAN COURT

The passing of William III. removes from the stage one of the great figures of history. The vastness of his schemes, the intensity of his will, the domination that he exercised over the whole of Europe, belong to a more heroic era than the eighteenth century. But his work was accomplished; though he only viewed the promised land, another entered in; Marlborough completed the task that William had left ready to his hand. The victories of Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde and Malplaquet redeem the age of Anne, herself a rather pathetic puppet, and postpone the reign of prose that opens with the Hanoverian Succession.

The King's funeral, "scarcely decent, so far was it from being magnificent," marked the gravity of the moment, on the eve of a great war, as well as the ingratitude of his liberated people.

William Bentinck survived his great master for seven years, but during this closing period of his career he almost disappears into private life; fortunately enough letters have been preserved of his own and of other people to give some indication of how his time was spent.

The care of his numerous estates both in England and Holland were almost enough in themselves to occupy his time. That he did largely so occupy it is shown by the mass of papers relating to them. He took a personal interest in their administration and in the details of his expenditure and investments. Many pages of his accounts and balance sheets have been preserved, drawn up by his secretary Tromer or the Griffier Schulenberg, and sometimes written in Bentinck's own hand. One such is headed, "Memorandum of my money in Holland and elsewhere in the hands of Schulenberg."[1] Luttrell mentions Lord

[1] Egerton MSS. 1708, f. 11. Willem van Schulenberg was "Greffier and Maître des Comptes" of William III. at the Hague. His name frequently occurs among the Bentinck papers in statements of accounts.

Portland's subscribing to a loan to the Emperor at 8 per cent. on the security of Silesia.[1]

Lord Portland was also much occupied with the establishment of his children. In May 1700 he had made a second marriage, so that besides the children of Anne Villiers, there was soon a second young family growing up. His eldest daughter, the beautiful Lady Mary Bentinck, was married to Algernon Capell, second Earl of Essex, and his eldest son, Lord Woodstock, was eighteen at the time of his father's second marriage. It is pleasant to think that in spite of the inevitable regrets that clouded the retirement of his last years William Bentinck found a solace in his home at Bulstrode and the society of his wife and children.

His second wife came of a distinguished English family, one member of which at least had been known to him since boyhood, for she was the niece of Sir William Temple. Martha Jane Temple was the daughter of Sir John Temple of East Sheen in Surrey [2] and widow of Lord Berkeley of Stratton.[3] After his death she lived in Dover Street. Her friendship with William Bentinck was of some standing, as appears from a letter of her Aunt Gifford written in 1698. Lady Gifford was the favourite sister of Sir William Temple and widow of Sir Thomas Gifford. She wields a sprightly pen, and the tone of her letters implies an affectionate intimacy between herself and her niece. The first letter is inscribed:

"For my Lady Berkeley,
"In Dover Street, London.
Sept. ye 14, 1698.[4]

"We are got hither at last, and Papa I thank God very well, and so insufferably pert with winning twelve guineas at crimp last night. The Duke of Somerset says he never remembers to have seen him better. We came on Monday

[1] Luttrell, vi. 24.

[2] *Will* of Sir John Temple of East Sheen dated November 22, 1704: "I commend and resign my soul to God who gave it and my body to be buried privately in the night, without any escutcheons, or other funeral pomp in the Church yard at Mortlake, in a vault to be made there for me and my family, or else in the Church on the gallery where I usually sit, as my wife and my executor shall think fitt. . . . I leave to my sister Gifford, and to my four daughters, Lady Portland, Lady Berkeley, Lady Dixwells and Lucy Temple the sum of two hundred pounds to be equally divided amongst them which small legacy bears no proportion with my great kindness and affection to them, or with the sense that I have of theirs to me."

[3] She was "said to be worth £20,000." Luttrell, iv., May 1700.

[4] 1705 A. Egerton MSS.

in the evening, and just before ye Duchess had a letter from Ld Scarborough to say she went to London to-day for a fortnight, and intended to see me at More Parke, as she went by, soe ye harme is not yet ended that has hindered us from meeting. . . . Now I must tell you what mortifications I hear have befallen some of your friends and mine. My Ld Portland, and Mons Overkirke I hear have had a quarrel at Loo, and the last they say, has used him like a dog, which I am apt enough to beleeve for people are but too apt to insult, when one is falling, and when nobody will help to right one. I beleeve one has seldom the heart to do anything towards it themselves, this they say, has extreemly exalted another person, and altogether is thought more than my Ld Portland can bear any longer."

This letter shows that Lord Portland had at least some staunch and influential friends at the time in his life when he most needed them, and when time-servers were hurriedly dissociating themselves from his fallen estate. Shortly after his marriage with her niece Lady Gifford continued her correspondence.

July 14, 1705, she writes :

"I was asked what the Deputy Stadtholders Place is worth to my Ld Portland that it obliges him to leave England, I have asked him myself last post what I am to believe of it, and therefore will leave it for another thing I am to know of you if there be any truth in it. I was told yt before my Ld Portland left Windser he sent to ye Princess to know how many bucks he should have killed for her this year, and she was angry to be asked—said she would order as many as she had a mind for herselfe, this put me in mind of what you told me upon yr taking leave there, and my Ld P. of the Prince, and made me resolve to write you what I heard of it."

In 1701 William Bentinck's heir, the young Lord Woodstock, about whose upbringing he had been so careful, had been sent on the Grand Tour in charge of the historian Thoyras Rapin as his tutor. His letters home were carefully preserved by his father. They are very neat and correct,

and consequently of no great interest, as they bear the marks of careful superintendence by a conscientious mentor.

The boy was kept in leading strings to a later age than pleased himself, for, when he was nineteen, Rapin writes to Lord Portland from the Hague to say that the last time the King was at the Hague he had sent for the Lord Woodstock into his cabinet "luy avoit fait beaucoup de caresses et luy avoit dit des choses fort obligeantes." The King also advised him "to hasten his voyage into England as much as possible," and the boy was in short persuaded that if his tutor would get his father's consent to his going into England, he had only to ask for the command of his father's regiment of cavalry and "the King would ask nothing better than to give it him." His father, however, had other views for him, and the shrewd pedagogue Rapin had other views for himself. Soon afterwards he began his travels, and the following April he is writing from Rome to say that they had heard on the journey of the King's accident and death, but seeing by a letter from his father that the King was almost out of danger, he hopes the news is false. The letter concludes with a dutiful message to his stepmother. He hopes "that Madame is quite recovered" and sends the assurance of his humble respects.

On April 15 the news of the King's death was confirmed, and Lord Woodstock hastened to write what he and M. Rapin considered a very proper letter of formal regret: "in what affliction and what embarrassment does not this put all well disposed people!" he exclaims, and piously trusts "that Divine Providence will find a happy issue from so great a misfortune."

Perhaps this expression of regret was considered too impersonal, or perhaps their father knew that the young Bentincks had their own views and expressed them freely among themselves on his relations with the late King. At any rate it appears to have called forth from Lord Portland a very severe rebuke, and his son hastens to explain away the ill-impression he has made, and to reassure his father as to the correctness of his sentiments. His reply also suggests that his father was finding the expense of the tour heavy.

"I cannot conceal from you that the suspicion that you express in one of your letters has surprised me extremely, having never given occasion for it, and I can assure you that

I shall not do so. I know very well that the loss caused by the death of the King is very great, and especially for me in particular. I am as sensible of it as it is possible to be; but although young I have sufficiently recognised already that by the frequent changes of the world and by its eternal inconstancy that it is necessary to be prepared for all its diverse chances, and that which sometimes appears to overwhelm a person is often the first step in his fortune. These thoughts are some consolation in the present circumstances. As for expense we spend as little as possible."

Rapin himself had been concerned about the question of expenses as early as January 1702. He told Lord Portland that he was doing what he could to curtail them, but his efforts in this respect were not being seconded. By March he had come to the conclusion that what Lord Woodstock needed was not a governor, but a friend in whom he had confidence; and in October he left the young man to continue his journey alone. He reported to Lord Portland that he would willingly have continued his services, but that the money he was allowed was insufficient to balance the expenses that were necessary to do honour to his employment.

In the spring Lord Portland fell ill, and his son writes again full of concern at hearing of it: [1]

"My Lord, it is with great distress that I have seen from a letter that I have received from M. de Voorschooten, that you have been unwell, but as my sisters tell me nothing of it, I hope it has not been anything of consequence and that I shall learn from the next letters that you are perfectly well."

The same note of real feeling is touched in a later letter from Lord Woodstock after Anne's Coronation, a ceremony from which the Portlands could not have absented themselves without remark, however uncongenial attendance at it might be to them. In every mention of Lady Portland her stepson shows a kindness and sympathy which is more than the expression of a merely conventional courtesy:

[1] Rome, April 22, 1702.

"Rome, June 21, 1702.

"I am very glad to learn that the ceremony of the Coronation is over, being persuaded that it would be an embarrassment and a fatigue very disagreeable for you, as also a very painful day to Madame."

After the Coronation, the embarrassments and fatigues of which Lord Woodstock so properly held would be trying to the Portlands, they went to Holland where a part of every year was spent. Their country house was at Sorgvliet, where a later letter from Lord Woodstock reached them after their arrival in Holland. He dutifully observes that Madame (who will be extremely fatigued) will be able to rest at leisure, "and divert herself in the promenades which must be extremely agreeable now." Their town house was in the fashionable quarter of the Voorhout at the Hague, near the Huis ten Bosch, the "House in the Wood" of the Prince and Princess of Orange. It had recently been decorated and enlarged. Portland's secretary, Tromer, gave a receipt for 6000 "Caroly Guilders" for further building and other expenses.[1]

In Holland public attention would naturally have been concentrated on the renewal of a European war, now waged on her threshold. The Spanish Netherlands no longer remained as a buffer between herself and France, and it was therefore necessary to conquer the Spanish Low Countries. Quite an unforeseen complication was, however, introduced by the will of William III.

William III. had left great private possessions, of which Frederick I. of Prussia believed himself to be the sole heir, as grandson of Prince Frederick Henry of Nassau; and Schmettau, his Ambassador at the Hague, made representations on behalf of his master, with full power to take possession, asking the co-operation of the States-General and States of Holland. The question was a difficult one for all concerned. It was highly undesirable to alienate the King of Prussia and throw him into the arms of France [2] on the eve of war, but Portland announced that a will of William III. was in existence which bequeathed all his private property, not to his

[1] Egerton MSS., March 21, 1701. The Caroly Guilder was of the coinage of Charles V.

[2] The Elector of Brandenburg was given the title of King of Prussia as the price of his adhesion to the Alliance.

cousin in Berlin, but to his relative the young Prince Friso of Nassau, still a minor, son of Casimir of Nassau, Stadtholder of Friesland.

The question immediately raised European complications, both in London and Vienna, and when the Prussian Ambassador in London asked for access to William III.'s papers, the request was refused; but the fact of its having been made roused suspicions. Part of the late King's possessions, the Estate of Orange, for instance, lay within the dominions of Louis XIV., and it was thought that Frederick was seeking an occasion of coming to an understanding with France.

When the will was opened on May 5 it proved, as Portland had said, to be dated October 1695, and to leave Friso of Nassau as heir. The States-General were nominated as executors. The King of Prussia entered a protest. War was declared by England, Holland and the Emperor against France shortly after the reading of the will, but when Frederick was asked to join, he replied that the States-General knew his upright sentiments towards the common good, but a French army was occupying Cleves and he could not take a step which would bring upon him the devastation of his lands.[1]

The States-General dealt tactfully with a delicate situation. They offered their mediation, and asked the King to approve that as executors of both wills, that of Prince Frederick Henry of Orange and William III., they should in the meantime administer the whole, including the feudal estate. On this Frederick betook himself to the Hague and took up his residence in the old palace of his grandfather, Prince Frederick Henry. The Princess of Nassau came there also to uphold the rights of her son (for William had omitted to appoint guardians). The rival claims were most bitterly contested, especially over the dead King's jewels, but this curious bypath of history concerns Lord Portland no further, and it is enough to say that for the safety of Europe Frederick had to be ultimately bought off, on a hint let fall by some of his courtiers that if he were not contented in the matter he would conclude a Treaty of Neutrality with France. Lord Woodstock, who was now at Celle, commented on the dispute:

[1] The Elector of Bavaria and his brother the Elector of Cologne agreed to remain neutral.

"March 17, 1703.

"The news we have received from Holland touching the will of the King of England surprises people. It is considered that they have been rather precipitate about it, and that it would have been better to take time, since the exercise of tact with the King of Prussia is extremely necessary at present. For he will be deeply offended at this exclusion. The Dutch are not now popular in Berlin."

Among the meagre sources of information for these last years are the important series of letters to Robéthon,[1] Counsellor to his Highness the Duke of Celle. Robéthon, a Frenchman who had been driven to take service abroad by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, had been at one time employed by William III. He became the confidential secretary of the Elector and Electress and drafted a very large number of the letters of the Electoral family during this period. It was after the death of George William Duke of Celle in 1705, and the union between Celle and Hanover, that he passed into the service of the Elector.

The Robéthon correspondence covers the years 1699–1709 [2] and becomes increasingly intimate, as if the writer clung to the memories of the little Court of Celle and the friends of his former master. The first of the letters is written from Windsor, May 5 (15), 1699, and alludes to business connected with France and the visit of Tallard to England. It concludes: "Yesterday I gave some letters for you to M. d'Allonne. Do not ask permission to come and see me. I shall be very glad since I am yours with all my heart."

In a second letter written from Sorgvliet in August of the same year Bentinck forwards the replies Tallard has made to representations concerning the liberty of persons established in Orange before the peace, to travel on business in France unmolested.

A later letter thanks Robéthon for the details in his last letter of the visit of "the two Electrices" [3] to the King and asks him to continue sending him news after his return to England. Portland adds: "I am very glad to know that the Duc de Celle is arrived in good health at Loo, I wish him still many years."

[1] Stowe MSS. British Museum.

[2] Two of these letters were published in Macpherson's Original Papers.

[3] The Electress Sophia and her daughter the Electress of Brandenburg, September 1700.

The estrangement between Portland and the King, which was at this time common talk, is referred to in a letter, written shortly after his return to England, from Windsor (November 3, 1699), with that note of bitterness which in these last years frequently appears in his correspondence:

"I am very glad that the King has given you a lodging in the Court, no matter that it belonged to one of my people, if it were mine I should see you enter upon its possession with pleasure, but I have no longer pretensions to anything and shall be more content that it should be yours than any others."

After the death of William the correspondence assumes a more particular character. In an unofficial and rather surreptitious way William Bentinck watched over the interests of the Hanoverian Succession which at the beginning of Anne's reign suffered an eclipse. He was not only a staunch Protestant but a devoted adherent of the House of Brunswick. He kept in touch with the Freiherr von Schütz, Ambassador for Celle and Hanover in London, and made use of him as a safe channel through which information concerning their interests could be sent.

That Anne herself was disposed to support the claims of her stepbrother, the pretended Prince of Wales, to the throne appears from a letter written to her by James II.'s widow, Maria Beatrice. It will be remembered that Anne had made her peace with James as long before as 1691. After the death of Mary, when, according to the Bill of Rights of 1689, Anne became the next heir to the throne, she wrote to her father and proposed that he should agree to her accepting the Crown after the death of the Prince of Orange on the understanding that she should restore it, when a suitable opportunity offered, pointing out that a refusal on his part would only still further postpone the hope of his recovery of his rights and relegate the Crown into worse hands, from which it would not be easily again retrieved.[1]

After the death of James II., Anne's stepmother wrote to her,[2] sending her father's last blessing and forgiveness, with

[1] Clarke's *Life of James II.*, vol. ii. 559.
[2] *Life of James II.*, vol. ii. p. 602. September 27, 1701.

a message to the effect that he prayed God to turn her heart, and to strengthen her in the resolution to make good to his son the wrongs done to himself.

Subsequently Anne opposed William's proposal to invite the Electoral Prince George Augustus to England, on the pretext that she again had hopes of an heir; but on the King's death she accepted the Crown, thereby acting contrary to her father's last exhortation and foregoing his dying blessing. Her doing so involved the recognition of the right of Parliament to dispose of the Crown, and consequently was an acquiescence in the Hanoverian Succession, as established by law. Anne assured the Electress Sophia, through the Cellischen-Hanoverian Ambassador Schütz, that she entertained the same sentiments towards the House of Hanover as her predecessor, and afterwards wrote herself to the same effect. The Electress was under no illusion as to Anne's enthusiasm for her House. She wrote to her niece: "The assurance of the Queen has cost me a letter in answer, whether they will now still want me in England time will show" ("zal de tyd leeren").[1]

Thus, though Anne was not personally inclined to the Hanoverian Succession, she was forced to support the parliamentary principle in order to retain the Crown herself, because if her brother at St. Germain had any right, it was the first, and she herself was only a usurper.

In 1680 a scheme had been on foot for the marriage of the Princess Anne and the Electoral Prince George Louis. William, then Prince of Orange, told Henry Sidney that he had done a great deal in the matter. Such an alliance would at that time have strengthened his hands by detaching Hanover from France. The Electoral Prince paid a short visit to England, and was favourably received by Anne, but returned home and afterwards married his cousin Sophia Dorothea of Celle. His family were not anxious for the English alliance.

[1] The Electress Sophia to her niece the Raugravine Louise, April 13, 1702. "Of the journey to England there is no talk either here or in England, either for my grandson [George II.] or myself. . . . Still I think it is all one, whether I die here or in England."

There are many more references of the same kind. In June the Electress writes that her friends think she will receive an invitation to England. "It's all one to me, in this world I have little time remaining."

The Raugravine Louise was the daughter of Carl Ludwig of the Palatinate and his morganatic wife Louise von Degenfeld. Her fourteen children were given the title of Raugräfin and Raugräfinen.

The Elector himself, George I. of England, as he afterwards became, never felt or showed any desire for the English Crown; indeed the treatment of William III. by his Parliament, in leaving him without defences, and depriving him of his guards, was not such as to encourage his successor. The Electress herself, on the other hand, in spite of assertions to the contrary, was far from averse from the idea. She had a great sense of dignity and pride of birth, and did not wish to be precipitate or to take steps herself of any kind that would compromise her, especially having regard to the inconstant English. She never affected to believe in the story of the supposititious birth of James II.'s son, and always gives him his title of "Prince of Wales." She had indeed a kindness for that unfortunate family, and at one time it appeared possible that the Prince might be brought up as a Protestant and recognised as heir to the throne. Moreover there was Anne's son, the Duke of Gloucester; after his death in 1700,[1] followed by that of Charles II. of Spain and the acceptance by Louis XIV. of that vast inheritance for his grandson, the position was much changed, and the discussions on the Succession question between William and the Electoral family bore fruit the next year in their grateful acquiescence in the Act of Settlement. Stepney had written to the Electress to say that the English nation were so well disposed towards the Hanoverian Succession, that no steps were necessary to promote it on their part, so much so that William III. himself avoided mentioning the Electress by name, when asking Parliament to secure the Succession, leaving them to take the initiative. After the passing of the Act of Settlement in June 1701, when William met his old friend George William of Celle at Loo as usual, the Duke's grandson, Prince George Augustus of Hanover, was received by him as a son. It was on this occasion that William promised to obtain from Parliament an annual revenue for the Electress Sophia, and to invite her and the Electoral Prince to England, in the following spring.[2] Anne objected to this suggestion on the ground that she again had hopes of an heir, and by the following spring William was dead. For him the Hanoverian Succes-

[1] See letter of Electress to Leibnitz on learning of the death of the Duke of Gloucester, August, 1700.

[2] Luttrell, v., September 1701. "The Electoral Prince of Hanover comes over hither next month. His Majesty has ordered lodgings to be prepared at St. James."

sion meant the Protestant Succession, meant the Revolution of 1688, stood for all that he had lived for. Almost the last Act of his last Parliament was the passing of the Bill attainting the Pretender, and abjuring the Stuarts. A Succession clause bound members of the Grand Alliance not to conclude peace with France till the King of England was given satisfaction for the insult he had received in the recognition of the Pretender by Louis XIV.

Any hopes that the Hanoverian House had of an invitation to England died away in September 1702. The Electress wrote: "People in England think no more about me," and while the remembrance of the Succession was kept alive by English visitors, official and unofficial, to the Hanoverian Court, the Electress complained: "I derive no advantage from the English Succession, only expense." So it came about that the Earl of Portland was self-constituted and unofficial observer and held a watching brief for the interests of the Hanoverian Court.

In September 1702 Portland writes again from the Hague, he had seen Robéthon in the interval and discussed with him the public affairs in which he no longer took an active part.

"I have safely received your very agreeable letter, Monsieur, and I am delighted that you are so well established, which affects me very nearly. I have seen the letter that you have written to M. the Pensionary and to M. d'Allonne, and I know what the former has replied to you."

There follows a very guarded commentary, and the letter continues:

"As for me I am returning if it please God in a fortnight, and you know my sentiments well enough on all points to be aware that anything I can do to further the views of M. l'Electeur will not be neglected."

He begs M. Robéthon to assure

"M. le Duc de Celle and M. l'Electeur [of Hanover] that I shall continue in my respectful sentiments for their House. I am too old to change, and too imbued with the sentiments

of the late King my master to deviate from them. Besides, I love my religion and hate slavery. I hope that my son, who is about to leave Italy, will have the honour of paying his court to them, and I doubt not that he will be received as the son of a faithful servant of their House."

The old diplomatist, however, does not wish his affection for the Hanoverian House to appear too evident :

" But he had better not remain with you too long, because in order to be useful, people must not suspect me of being too attached. It is for the same reason that I beg, when you write to me, after my return to England, as I hope you will do, that you will send my letters to M. de Schütz, without any signature, in order that in case they are intercepted, no one will know the letters are addressed to me, and when you have anything of importance with which to acquaint me to make use of the seal of M. l'Electeur."

In the New Year the young Lord Woodstock was due to arrive at Celle. His anxious father writes (Whitehall, January 8 (19), 1703) that it is so long since M. Robéthon has been " incommoded " by a letter that he fears he has forgotten him, and then continues :

" I believe about this time you will have with you a young man, who will remind you of me. He will have great need of your assistance and direction in his conduct at your Court, for which he is counting on your long-standing friendship for him. I am too old to change my principles, I am always the same."

M. Robéthon sent a New Year's present to the Bentincks, and in thanking him Lord Portland again recurs to the subject of his son's visit.

" Whitehall, January 22 (February 2), 1703.

" I should, and do send you, Monsieur, very many thanks for your remembrance, and especially for the excellent boars' heads that you have sent me. You could not have made me a present that was more agreeable to me. I believe that you will have another opportunity of obliging me

according to your own inclination and our friendship, since my son must be now at Hanover, he will have need of your advice and help in order not to fail in his duty in your Courts, for which I have as great a respect as you know. I hope that you will not refuse them to him, and that you will tell him something about the character of our English Ministers that he may not begin by making mistakes with regard to them."

There were several Englishmen of importance at the Hanoverian Court in February 1703 besides the Ambassador Cresset, "the civil, honest, obliging English Envoy." The discerning Electress appraises them in her letters to Leibnitz.[1] Lord Winchelsea, the Earl of Nottingham's son, had come over on a complimentary visit from the Queen of England. "A good creature," the Electress observed of him, "but neither a great politician nor a good dancer. He needs guidance equally for his head and his feet." The poet Addison, who was also a visitor at her Court, won from the Electress a more kindly comment: "a very good, and what is still more unusual, a very modest poet"; but, she adds, "he is very silent in my presence." Her estimate of Lord Winchelsea may have been jaundiced by the fact that the custom of the day necessitated the bestowal of costly presents upon an Ambassador at parting. "The good my lord Winchelsea is very heavy in hand, with all my sçavoir faire I have difficulty in entertaining him." Of Lord Willoughby, Lord Lindsay's son, she says: "He keeps his mouth always open in the hope of catching some wits, not having found any in the house of his father." Lord Archibald Campbell, son of the Duke of Argyle, "is believed to have wit." Of Lord Scudamore the Electress writes: "He is very rich, his money is the only thing which gives him value."

It was suggested that the Electress should take an English Chaplain, but she writes to the Raugräfin: "This would apparently be two or three gathered together in the name of the Lord, for there would not be more auditors."

Both the Elector and the Electress wrote very kindly to Lord Portland on the subject of his son's visit. The Electress writes, January 13, 1703:

[1] Leibnitz Works, ix. 5. Correspondence with the Electrice Sophia.

"I waited, Monsieur, to express my proper gratitude for your obliging letter, in order that I might be able at the same time to give you news of my lord Wudstock, who only arrived here three days ago. I assure you, my Lord, that he is the admiration of everybody, and that no one could see his frank bearing without loving him. I was well resolved to give him a warm welcome for love of you, but I must own, that it is now for his own sake, and that I am rejoiced to see a son of yours with whom you have reason to be so satisfied. One sees in him that English and Dutch blood do not mingle badly." [1]

No father could fail to have been delighted with so cordial and flattering a verdict, especially from the distinguished lady who was now heiress to the throne. Happily my Lord was unaware that the Electress was writing at the same time to her niece the Raugräfin Louise (February 8, 1703): [2] "My Lord Wudstock is here also. He is a fine fellow, but very affected." Later on, in March, the Electress wrote a kindly reassuring letter to Lord Portland. "I assure you, my Lord, that my Lord Wudstock has no need at all of S[r] Robton [Robéthon], and I am sure that you will find him all he should be when he has the good fortune to see you again."

In one of the boy's letters home he reported that the Elector was "naturally very cold, but obliging to the last degree," and George Louis wrote himself very kindly to Lord Portland on the subject: [3]

"I was very glad, Milord, that you permitted Milord Woudstac to pass by here, although I am not able at making panegyrics, I cannot forbear telling you that he has been very agreeable here to all who have seen him. He could not be otherwise to me, being what he is, and belonging to a person for whom I have always had so great esteem, of which I beg you, Milord, to be entirely persuaded, and that it will always be a very great pleasure to me, when I can have the opportunity of rendering you a service."

[1] From the Welbeck Archives.
[2] Letters of the Electrice Sophia to the Raugräfin Louise.
[3] Hanover, March 7, 1703. Welbeck Archives.

Lord Woodstock returned home shortly after the visit to the Hanoverian Court during which his father had been so anxious that he should acquit himself well. He writes from the Hague in May (1703) that he "has visited Sorgvliet and observes the addition of a new Pheasantry, which will be very agreeable, though the hens are not as yet laying as had been expected, as they are not yet accustomed to being shut up."

After Lord Woodstock's return home, his father wrote to thank the Electress for her reception of him, and received a very kind letter of acknowledgment.

In the autumn Lord Portland was himself at Sorgvliet [1] according to his custom in these later years. From here he writes to M. Robéthon to congratulate him on his marriage: "You know I am sincerely interested in all your happiness and household, thus I wish you every kind of joy and satisfaction, under the Divine benediction it is a step on which depends all the contentment in this life."

The next year an important event took place in the Portland family. Lord Woodstock married Lady Elizabeth Noel. The Electress wrote herself to send congratulations:

"I assure you that I make a thousand wishes that he may be completely happy, and that Madame his wife may not become jealous, at least she will be very fortunate in having a most reasonable and very good natured husband, who will not make her repent of having so well employed her great estate, which is a very necessary thing in marriage, and shows, my Lord, that you are a very good father, for having chosen so well for my Lord your son." [2]

Luttrell writes of the marriage (June 10, 1704):

"Yesterday the Lord Woodstock on whom his father has settled to the value of £10,000 per annum, was married to the Lady Elizabeth Noel, eldest daughter of the Dutchess of Buckingham by the Earl of Gainsborough. Her fortune above £60,000"—a great estate as the Electress observed.

M. Robéthon wrote to congratulate his old friend, and Lord Portland replies:

[1] September 7, 1703.

[2] Welbeck Archives.

LORD WOODSTOCK.

From the painting by Hyacinthe Rigaud at Welbeck Abbey, by kind permission of his Grace the Duke of Portland.

"Whitehall, June 27, 1704.

"I held myself well assured of your good wishes, before having received your obliging letter of felicitation, for which I thank you with all my heart. I believe you to be so much my friend, that I assure you I shall be very glad to share with you the happiness that may come to me in this world. It is always one to establish one's children well, when one cares for them; yesterday I had that of finally winning the vexatious and long lawsuit that my Lord Albemarle has caused me."

In the following July, when the Earl of Portland went to Holland, it was currently reported that he had gone to confer with the States-General on sending help to the Camisards, the French Protestants of the Cevennes, who were in rebellion.[1]

In the spring of this year the question of the Succession had again been raised in England. It had been so much in abeyance that the Electress Sophia wrote to her niece the Raugräfin, January 10, 1704: "Good Englishmen believe I think of nothing but the English Crown, and I never even dream of it," and this was so far true that the Electoral Prince George Augustus, at the age of nineteen, had not thought it necessary to acquaint himself with the language of the country whose throne he would occupy if the Succession Act of 1701 came into force; so illusory did such an event now appear.

The Electress was shrewd enough to recognise that Anne had no wish for the society of her probable successors on the throne. She professed indifference, but her disappointment shows through it in her intimate letters, letters pointed, witty and full of strong common sense. To her niece, the Raugräfin, she wrote (June 1702): "I hear nothing from England except that they pray for me in church. This has cost me a letter to the Queen to thank her for it."

A year later, in June 1703, the Electress was writing:

"Between ourselves . . . I am afraid that the Queen is not sincere towards this House and prefers her Lord brother to us, for in Scotland we have not even been named,

[1] See Luttrell, v., July 11, 1704, and Wagenaar, *Vaderlandsche Historie*, xvii.

there they think people are in favour of the Prince of Wallis."

In 1703 the question of the Protestant Succession had been raised in the Scottish Parliament, and a Bill of Security introduced with authorisation to appoint a successor from among the Protestant descendants of the Royal line; but unless security was given for economic and religious freedom that Sovereign was not to be the same as the successor to the English throne, and the nomination of the Princess Sophia by Lord Marchmont was very ill received. This Bill did not receive the Royal Assent, but its refusal was so unpopular that it was conceded when the Scottish Parliament met the next year (July 1704).

Towards the end of 1704 the Duke of Marlborough was in Berlin negotiating with Prussia for troops to be sent to the aid of Victor Amadeus in Piedmont; thence he also paid a visit to Hanover. He was believed to have gone there in the hopes of arranging a marriage between his youngest daughter and the Electoral Prince George Augustus, who shortly afterwards married Caroline of Anspach. The visit afforded an opportunity of paying a civility to the Electress, besides ascertaining the views of influential people with regard to the Succession. The versatile Marlborough acquitted himself admirably on this occasion. He testified for the Electress a distinguished, even exaggerated deference. She was won by his social ease, and grace and homage, and declared that he was as great a courtier as a general. She alluded to the verbal promise of an invitation to England given by William III. to her brother-in-law and grandson at Loo in 1701, three years before. If such an invitation were given to her she would come. It does not appear what reply was made by Marlborough, but no one knew better than himself that so long as Anne could prevent it, no such invitation would be sent.

The fact that the Succession in Scotland was not settled upon the Electress Sophia constituted a standing menace to the peace of both countries, as it encouraged Jacobite hopes of restoring the Pretender with the help of French troops, and overturning the Government of Anne as well in England as in Scotland.

In 1705, urged by the House of Lords, Anne instructed the Parliament to consider the settlement of the Succession

to the throne, and in April 1706, when commissioners met to discuss the points at issue between the two countries, the English Commissioner laid down as the principal questions to be decided, that there should be one Kingdom, one Parliament, and one Successor. The Union with Scotland was not completed till 1707, but the foregoing sketch will explain the allusions in the following letters. The first of these is merely a letter of condolence, on the death of Sophie Charlotte, wife of the King of Prussia, written in zealous loyalty for the Electoral House, with an excess of metaphor that is overwhelming. Portland writes:

"Whitehall, February 6 (17), 1705.

"You would not have been so much importuned by a second letter, but for this sad accident which has occurred and which has struck me like a blow from a club. What is the life of man! a flower of the field, which is cut off in the noonday, and withered towards evening, a vapour which passes, or a shadow. I can only feel my grief redoubled by the recollection of the loss we suffered of our own Queen, almost at the same age. This death, from the kindness that she has always shown me alone, compels me to regret her. I pity Madame l'Electrice to lose so dear and worthy an only daughter. I fear that she will be only too much affected by it. But she has too much strength of mind to allow herself to be overwhelmed by it, but will patiently submit to the Divine Will."

It is characteristic of Lord Portland that he leaves it to M. Robéthon's discretion whether he should present or withhold a letter of condolence.

The marriage of George Augustus [1] to Caroline of Anspach, and the death of William III.'s old friend, the Duke of Celle, were occasions on which so good a Hanoverian as Lord Portland could not omit sending congratulations and condolences, and the Elector of Hanover wrote himself in acknowledgment, enclosing his letter in one to the English Ambassador Cresset.

"October 12, 1705.

"My Lord, I am very sensible of the obliging manner in which you have expressed your share both in the happiness

[1] George II. of England.

that the marriage of my son has caused me, and in the grief that I have felt at the death of so good a Prince as the Duke de Cell. I am not ignorant of the very particular feelings of affection and esteem that he had for you. I shall give myself the pleasure, my Lord, of showing you the same, and of making you see on all occasions how much I am obliged for the proofs that you give me of your attachment to my interests."

An interval of seven months elapsed before Lord Portland wrote again in April 1706, about the time that the English and Scottish Commissioners were meeting to discuss the terms of union, with some prospect of the question of the Hanoverian Succession's being at last established on a firm basis in both countries. He writes to M. Robéthon with more than his usual frankness, and in a tone of querulousness :

"Whitehall, April 5 (16), 1706.

" Although it is a very long time since you have had news of me you must not think that it arises from a lack of remembrance of what is due to my old friends. As for what regards the service of their house I am sure that M. Schütz does me justice. But experience shows that there are servants of it here as good as the pretended ' inviteurs ' who thought to acquire merit, after having seen that all their opposition to the Succession was useless. What has given pain here to all honest men is that you have changed your minds. Such an opinion would have done great harm, if it had continued at a time when the Queen and the majority of Parliament give such unmistakable marks of their sincere intention of assuring the Succession. Yesterday the Queen assembled a Chapter of the Knights of the Order to which the Electoral Prince has been elected."

The allusion to the members of the House of Hanover as having changed their minds can refer only to the rumour that the Electress no longer cared about England, which had arisen from an incautious sentence in a letter addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury in the preceding November. " Thank Heaven," wrote the Electress," that I live here in content and in repose, so that I have no reason to desire

another kind of life." Interested persons seized on the sentence in order to misinterpret it and to say that a wish to play into the hands of the Jacobites had suggested it; and this was naturally annoying to honest men at a time when the promise of a Hanoverian Succession shone so brightly. In 1705 an attempt had actually been made by the Tories, headed by Rochester, to invite the Electress over. It was proposed in the Lords by Lord Haversham but defeated. Afterwards appeared a letter, signed by Sir Rowland Gwynne then residing at Hanover, hinting that the Electress approved the proposal, and censuring the Whigs for opposing it.[1] This letter, of which Leibnitz, the devoted friend and servant of the Electoral House, was the actual author, was voted libellous by the Commons. In October of the same year a Bill for the Naturalisation of the Electress and her descendants was passed. Sophia would have preferred the name of Brunswick-Lüneburg to have been preserved, instead of Hanover. There is an allusion to Sir Rowland Gwynne in a very kind letter of the Electress to Lord Portland written early in 1704:

"I should have difficulty in expressing to you, my Lord, the joy that I have had in seeing that you are so good as always to preserve the same sentiments towards me. It is true that I have never doubted it knowing your good heart. And if you know mine you also will not doubt the gratitude and the esteem that I shall always have for your merit. If I were capable of forgetting it I should have here Ser Roulant Guin, to recall it to me, who is your good servitor." [2]

M. Robéthon must have hastened to soothe Lord Portland's irritation expressed in his letter of April 5 with kind and reassuring messages from the Elector, for Portland shortly afterwards writes to George Ludwig:

"The Hague. June 1706.

"I am not disposed to weary your Electoral Highness by my letters, but I should believe myself wanting in my duty and in my gratitude if I did not express it to you, on what your Highness has been pleased to tell me through M.

[1] See A. Ward on the Hanoverian Succession. [2] Welbeck Archives.

Robéthon. And as I do not doubt that M. Schütz has informed your Electoral Highness of all my conduct, I will only say that you can count always on my sincere zeal in your service. The good success which the Good God has given to the arms of the Allies, and on which I can congratulate your Electoral Highness with all my heart, will contribute not a little to establish your interests everywhere."

The allusion refers to the victory of Marlborough, now in the full tide of his success, over Villeroy and the Elector of Bavaria at Ramillies on May 23, 1706.[1]

The Elector was so much gratified by this letter that he replied himself in the kindest terms expressing his appreciation of Lord Portland's long service :

"June 20, 1706.

"My Lord, I am very much obliged for the letter that you have taken the trouble to write, and the assurances that it contains of your zeal for the interests of my house. My Minister in London has given me an exact account of all the steps you have taken on different occasions for the establishment and security of the Protestant Succession. I beg you to believe that I depend greatly upon your affection, that I am very sensible of the marks that you have given me of it."

The Elector's mother, the Princess Sophia, seems to have been less appreciative of Lord Portland's efforts on behalf of her house, and he is evidently piqued. So much so that he did not write to offer his congratulations on the wedding of the Princess Sophia Dorothea and Frederick William I. of Prussia. He writes to M. Robéthon, however, from his country house at Bulstrode at the beginning of the year. January 27 (16), 1706/7, to say he had

[1] In May 1702 Marlborough had taken command of the Allied troops in the Netherlands in the War of the Spanish Succession which lasted till 1713. He had to contend with much the same difficulties as his predecessor in command, William III., in party quarrels at home, and still greater in divided councils in Holland, owing to the recrudescence of the Republican Party.

" refrained from writing to congratulate the Elector on the marriage of the Princess Royal to spare him the trouble of replying according to his habitual kindness—but I trust to you to do me the justice of recalling to his memory an ancient servant, who will be one always. Moreover at first I did not wish to trouble Madame the Electrice by my letter, but as I fear that a complete silence might appear negligent, I beg you to give her this letter, when she is disengaged. She did not seem to approve the last that I had the honour to write her although what I wrote was in her service and that of her house. However that makes me a little more careful, and imposes on me some silence. For I cannot change my opinions, or flatter from any motive of private interest, and experience shows and will show more every day, who have been, and are, the true friends of the Protestant Succession, in which it is impossible to be mistaken being on the spot."

The letter continues :

" I am here in a country house twenty miles from London, whence I can go to take my seat in Parliament on the slightest occasion. You will have learnt that a few days ago I married my daughter Frances to my Lord Biron, and am sure that you are enough my friend to desire the establishment of my family. I have dated my letter to Madame l'Electrice from London, because she cannot know whether Bulstrode is in Turkey or in England." [1]

Later in the year, while on his annual visit to Holland, Lord Portland wrote again :

" *De la Hage*, July 14, 1707.

" It grieves me to see myself here every year from beyond the sea without being able to embrace you. . . I am delighted that M. l'Elector has accepted the Command of the Imperial Army . . . assuredly he could do nothing that would tend more to his glory and his interests than to undertake the

[1] There is no letter from the Electress at Welbeck to which this can refer, nothing between the letter of February 1704/5, quoted above, and a letter of July 1707. Bulstrode was near Beaconsfield in Buckinghamshire.

support of an oppressed country. It was expected here that the King of Prussia would have sent more troops than he has done."

The Electress wrote herself the same month on the current events to which Lord Portland refers :

"I believe you see as well as I do myself that in the Empire they are mismanaging everything, and that they ought to have thought sooner of a fitter general to command the Imperial Army. With everything in disorder as it is at present, I believe my son the Elector will have much difficulty in remedying it. The King of Prussia will only contribute two thousand men, there will be more from the country of Brunswick which is not so large . . . the only good news that we have is from Naples." [1]

This and the following letter, with their allusions to current events, call for some explanation. In 1706 the Allies had been everywhere victorious. The Battle of Blenheim (August 1704) had made Germany safe, Ramillies (1706) was followed by the conquest of the Netherlands, Eugène of Savoy's successful campaign in Italy resulted in that country's joining the Grand Alliance, and the Allied arms had also been successful in Spain. So low had fallen the fortunes of Louis XIV. that he proposed terms on the basis of a new Partition Treaty by which the Archduke Charles, now called Charles III. of Spain, was to have Spain and the Indies, Anne was to be acknowledged Queen of England, Holland was to have her wished-for boundary in the Netherlands, and great commercial advantages were to be conceded. Louis only asked for his grandson Philip, Milan, Naples and Sicily to form a Kingdom in Italy. Never before, and never again, had the Allies such an opportunity. Had William III. been still alive there is no question what his decision would have been. But the Emperor Joseph I.[2] grudged the Dutch their proposed barrier, and Marlborough, who wished to continue the war partly on personal grounds, persuaded Heinsius, though with reluctance, to consent.

The next year (1707) the tide of victory turned against the Allies in Spain, and the victorious campaign of

[1] Welbeck Archives.

[2] He succeeded his father in 1705.

Charles XII. of Sweden became a serious menace to Germany, when after driving the Elector of Saxony from the throne of Poland, he entered Saxony itself. Here Marlborough's timely intervention by a visit to his camp directed his energies towards Russia, where his career of victory was checked at Pultowa (1709). Bentinck's reference to the "oppressed country" evidently refers to Sweden's campaigns in Saxony in 1705–6.

These events once more raised the hopes of Louis. The Union with Scotland was unpopular with a large proportion of the people there. The Jacobite party, it was said, would rise in arms if a rebellion were supported by a French fleet. The fleet was forthcoming; with it was to sail James Edward, the "Old Pretender," as he afterwards came to be called, but at the last moment he fell ill with measles, causing a delay of some weeks in the expedition. When at last it sailed, and, successfully evading the English fleet, reached the Firth of Forth, the hopes of the invaders proved abortive, there were no signs of a rising. The Electress comments to her niece (May 22, 1708): "The Prince of Wales is at Dunkirk, who knows whether God may not raise him up, who suffers so undeservedly." She adds: "His sister has the measles, and they say he is ill of it also." To this fact was attributed the failure of the expedition, which was much delayed. After the return of the Prince to France, the Electress wrote, "I should have been very sorry if he had been taken prisoner."

It is to these events, which took place early in 1708, that Lord Portland refers in the following letter to Robéthon.

"*Bulstrode*, April 23, 1708.

"It is so long since I have had news of you, that I fear you forget one of your old and best friends. It is true that I know I am too useless to render any considerable service. I am not of the temperament to play the man of importance sufficiently, which is the reason that I cannot dream of troubling their Electoral Highnesses, to whom I beg that you will sometimes recall me. I hope that my Lord the Elector will have come to some agreement with Prince Eugène and the Duke of Marlberreug, which will tend to the good of the Common Cause, and embarrass our enemies, whose designs, it seems, are somewhat gone astray since the Good God

has blown on the one that they had on this country which they believed impossible of failure, and which would have been our ruin. Providence has turned it to our great advantage.

"You have carried your kindness too far lately in wishing to make a present to my wife of two bottles of stags head water, of which she believes herself to have made an excellent use, and will be delighted if you can procure her some more of the same kind. But the consideration of your liberality would have prevented her from asking you for it, if I had not taken it upon myself assuring her that for the future when we trouble you with a tiresome commission you will be sure to tell me what it cost you."

Exactly what this remedy was that was so troublesome to procure and so valuable in its results we cannot tell. "Waters" of all kinds were in great request, and recipes for making them were carefully preserved and sent from one friend to another. Lady Sunderland mentions having written to the Princess Mary about "Queen of Hungary Water," a name given to Spirit of Rosemary. It is not impossible that "Eaux de teste de Cerf" was another name for Harts-horn, "essence de corne de cerf." There was besides a remedy used in some cases of heart trouble made from bones found in a stag's heart, "os de coeur de cerf." Whatever these "eaux de têtes de cerfs" may have been M. Robéthon was quick to take the hint in Lord Portland's letter and procure some more for him. He writes on May 17, 1708, to say that he is asking the apothecary of the late Duke to send him two bottles of "Eau de teste de Cerf."

"I have given to the Elector, the Electress and the Electoral Prince the assurances which Your Excellency bade me give on your part. They have been very agreeably received. I am instructed to tell you how very sensible Their Highnesses are of them, and that they count upon Your Excellency as a solid and effective friend whose good heart has been known to them by so long an experience, and by services of which they can never lose the remembrance without ingratitude."

To which Lord Portland replied :

" Bulstrode, May 25, 1708.

" I have received your very kind letter of the 17th of this month. I am greatly obliged to you, and my wife still more so, for having done what she asked you with so much promptitude. I do not need this water in England, I am going into Holland, and will bring it here, provided that you will have the kindness to address it to the Hague to M. d'Allonne, who will keep it till my arrival."

After respectful inquiries after the Electress and Elector, who are " en campagne," he continues :

" I am very glad that M. the Electoral Prince has done, with M. le duc de Marlborough and our troops, what cannot fail to have a good effect. It is very fortunate that everything is so well agreed upon and arranged for the conduct of the campaign. May the good God grant success. . . . The acquisitive temper of the King of Prussia is not a little to be feared by neighbouring princes, and despotic government by the nobility of Mecklenburg. I beg you to give the enclosed to M. l'Electeur."

The last letter of the series to M. Robéthon is written in the last year of William Bentinck's life, and has a note of weariness and melancholy, the weariness of old age, though he was not an old man in years.

" The Hague, August 19, 1709.

" Finding myself in this country, Monsieur, I cannot leave it, without recalling to you, a man, who esteems you, and whom you ought not wholly to forget for being at a distance. I beg you on occasion and when you deem it suitable to mention to their Electoral Highnesses an old servant very sincere though perhaps useless."

With these sad last words the drama of William Bentinck's life closes for us. He was taken ill in November, of what Lord Woodstock describes as a fever, and died after a short illness at Bulstrode. His son wrote two days later to break the news to M. d'Allonne :

"I am so persuaded that you take an interest in all that happens in our family that I should believe myself failing in what I owe to you if I did not acquaint you with the great loss that has just befallen us of a father that we can never enough regret. After 12 days fever it pleased the Eternal God to take him to Himself on November 23 (December 4) at 5 o'clock in the morning. The desolation in which we are ourselves makes us pray the Good God to defend you against all kinds of affliction and misfortune. These are the ardent wishes of one who is with perfect sincerity, Monsieur,

"Your very humble and very obedient servant,

"Portland."

A few days later the new Earl of Portland wrote further:

"Bulstrode, November 29, 1709.

"Having told you by my last letter, my dear Sir, of the loss that we have just suffered, and doubting not that you take all the part in it imaginable, I cannot resist giving you news of all the family, who in the midst of all possible grief are thank God in good enough health. We all go to-morrow to Whitehall for the funeral, which will take place the end of this week, a ceremony which can only renew the affliction and grief with which we are already overwhelmed, but it is a last duty that must be rendered."

Of William Bentinck's many wills drawn up at various periods during his career the most interesting is that dated 1705.[1] It concerns only his daughters, and the children of his second marriage, for as is expressly stated he had already made provision in England for his eldest son Henry Bentinck, Lord Woodstock,[2] who was heir to the English title and succeeded to the English estates. Of Anne Villiers's four daughters, Mary and Anne Margaret had already received a marriage portion of £10,000 each, a like

[1] Egerton MSS. 1708, f. 141.

[2] A will of 1704 left all real property in England and Great Britain to Lord Woodstock excluding all Dutch possessions. This will also provided for his wife and two unmarried daughters.

sum was now bequeathed to Frances Willemina, and Isabella Bentinck.

Secondly, with regard to the children of the second marriage, the daughters were to be co-heirs to the sum of £10,000. All the Dutch estates went to the only son, William Bentinck. He took his father's Dutch title of Lord of Rhoon, and afterwards becoming a Count of the Holy Roman Empire, founded the Dutch branch of the Bentinck family who bear the title of Counts Bentinck at the present time. The older branch, from which Hans William Bentinck himself sprang, still survives in the Barons Bentinck descended from his elder brothers of Diepenheim and Schoonheten. William Bentinck the younger succeeded to a princely inheritance: "All lands and estates in the Provinces of Holland, Utrecht, Overyssell, Drenthe or elsewhere, with all household goods in any of our houses here in Holland, with the sum of three hundred thousand guilders." In case there were no sons to succeed him, this property was to go to Yonker Willem Bentinck at Diepenheim, the second son of the most noble Lord Eusebius Burchard Bentinck, Lord of Schoonheeten. To his wife Lord Portland bequeathed for life (unless she married again) the house and all it contains in the Voorhout, the house at Sorgvliet with gardens, plantations, and sums for upkeep, also eight thousand guilders yearly for life (or till remarriage).

Like a good master he left legacies to his dependents, three years' wages to servants who had been seven years or longer in his service.

The executors of the will were his widow, Lady Portland; the eldest son, Lord Woodstock; Lord Portland's brother, Lord Eusebius Bentinck at Diepenheim, Lord of "Schoonheyte"; John van Arnhem of Rosendaal; Arnt van Wassenaer, Lord of Voorschoten, and Yonker Willem Bentinck at Diepenheim.

By a codicil dated April 30, 1709, shortly before his death, Lord Portland leaves all the furniture in the apartments at Whitehall to his "beloved wife Jane Martha," all plate and furniture belonging to her at her remarriage, and all plate "whereon her coat of arms together with mine are engraved," a coach and harness for six horses, "which she shall please to elect."

The possessions that fell to the share of Lord Woodstock, the English estates, may be estimated from a brief Inventory

of Lord Portland's English possessions at the time of his death :

	£	s.	d.
The Estate of Theobalds in Hertfordshire	44,079	10	0
An Estate in Westminster in the parish of St. Anne comprising streets which contain several houses	376,027	10	0
Grantham in Lincolnshire; Penrith in Cumberland; Rudheath and Drackton in Chester; Torrington in Norfolk; Bristall Garth, Hornsey Thring, Brunsley and Leven in Yorkshire; Pevensey in Sussex ..	86,643	3	9
An Estate not named	3,000	0	0
The Estate of Bulstrode	20,000	0	0
An annuity of £1900 which at 16 years' purchase was valued at	30,400	0	0
Wedding present to his eldest son, a sum which if capitalised amounted to..	115,000	0	0
It was calculated that he left in money besides the above, sums equal to	150,000	0	0
Jewels, plate, etc.	25,000	0	0
	£850,150	3	9

(Egerton MSS. 1708, f. 272.)

Lady Portland survived her husband many years. Twenty years after his death she wrote a letter to her son Willem Bentinck concerning her will, which suggests that the assignment of their father's property had caused differences among the two families of young Bentincks ; though any impartial reader must admit it to have been an eminently fair one. He can have had little influence in England to establish the son of his second marriage, but in Holland, with all his family connections, his position was assured. Lord Woodstock, on the other hand, was already grown up and had had the advantage of his father's great position to start him in the world, as well as his wife's connections. Lady Portland wrote :

" Whitehall, June 1729.

" I have made my will in my dear son's favour, and hope that tho' it is not in so clear a manner as it might be, that notwithstanding, my dear son, you will follow whatever you think is my desire, for I have had my view wholly in keeping union amongst you, and for that purpose you are sensible I have given up my pains and my money. Pray God bless you all and make you support one another, on every occasion. The ill success the papers had that my Lord left his children

has hindered me leaving any such behind me. You all know the tenderness of my affection for every one of you, and my strictest injunction to you living and dying is for you to love and serve God, for then I may be sure you will have these blessings living and dying. Yt has been prayed for you all by your most kind and most tender and affectionate mother,

"M. PORTLAND.

"If I should die in England you will do well to come over immediately, for when you are all in ye same place things will be regulated with more kindness."

In looking back over the crowded years of William Bentinck's life his outstanding characteristic is undeviating devotion to what he believed to be his duty; a staunch adherence to a standard of integrity uncommon in that age of transition, of shifting landmarks and uncertain loyalties. There can be no doubt that in severing his connection with William III. he was acting in accordance with that high standard, and his action caused him profound suffering, after which he never again recovered his mental resilience and zest for life. His intelligence was clear sighted rather than brilliant, and his success as a diplomatist due more to his moral qualities of strength of will, tenacity of purpose, and limpid honesty than to intellectual acumen. He was above all else a loyal and faithful servant, and his epitaph shall be "servire regnare."

DESCENDANTS OF WILLIAM BENTINCK BY HIS MARRIAGE WITH ANNE VILLIERS.

Anne Villiers, 1678, died 1688 = Hans William Bentinck, 1st Earl of Portland (2nd Creation), 1649–1709

- Mary, 1679 = Algernon Capell, 2nd Earl of Essex
- Willem, b. 1681, died young
- Henry Bentinck, Lord Woodstock, 2nd Earl (1709), and 1st Duke (1716) of Portland (Governor of Jamaica), b. 1682 at the Hague, d. 1726 = Lady Elizabeth Noel, 1704
- Anne Margaret = Arend Baron Wassenaar (Amb. Ext. to English Court)
- Frances = William Lord Byron
- Eleonora Sophia
- Isabella

DESCENDANTS OF WILLIAM BENTINCK BY HIS MARRIAGE WITH LADY BERKELEY OF STRATTON

Hans William Bentinck = Martha Jane née Temple, May 12, 1700 (widow of Lord Berkeley of Stratton)

Sophia b. April 1701, at Whitehall	= Henry de Grey, Duke of Kent	Elizabeth	= Henry Egerton Bishop of Hereford	William, Lord of Rhoon, b. 1704, at Whitehall. Created a Count of the Holy Roman Empire, December 1732 (Varel & Knyphausen Line)	Henrietta	Charles John, b. 1708, at Bulstrode.	Barbara, b. at Bulstrode, October 1709

The above genealogies and facts concerning the origin of the Bentinck family were taken from a document copied by Mrs. Aubrey le Blond from the Welbeck Archives. "Stammtafel des Hauses Bentinck," 1894.

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